

# EASIER PROSE SELECTIONS

Approved by the Board of High School  
and Intermediate Education,  
U. P., Allahabad.

FOR

Secondary Schools.

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ALLAHABAD

RAI SAHIB RAM DAYAL AGARWALA  
PUBLISHER

Price 1/6



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Acknowledgement for kind permission to include copyright pieces are due to :—*

Messrs Thomas Y. Crowell Company of New York for *Why there is Evil in this World* by Count Leo Tolstoy;

Messrs Allahabad Law Journal Co. Ltd of Allahabad for *The Early Men* by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru;

The Registrar, Hindu University, Banaras for *The Sweet Singer of Rajputana* by Dr. Annara Besant;

Messrs Cassell & Company Ltd. of London for *The Czarina's Violet* by Sir Arthur Quiller Couch;

Messrs Navjivan Trust of Ahmedabad for *At the High School* by Mahatma Gandhi.



## PREFACE

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A book that overlooks the psychology of the child is neither interesting nor useful to him. If is, therefore, essential that the new selections of English prose for the Secondary Schools should be adapted to the apperceptive mass of the students now. With the dawn of Freedom in this country, the pendulum has swung, and people have ceased to take interest in everything foreign. English by language, the language of the old rulers of this country, does not command the same attention; specially of the younger generation of this country. The new promotion rules of twenty percent have told heavily on the standard of English in these provinces.

The *Easier Prose Selections* aims at presenting lessons which would be both interesting and within the mental range of the present-day students of the standard. The lessons treat of fable, story, drama, letter and short biographies written by standard writers of 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Every lesson opens with a short introduction of the author, and ends with the notes and exercises, which would be useful to the students. It is expected that the present selections being both intelligible and interesting to the students will develop a taste in them to study other books of English, specially of these authors. If these selections succeed in this, the purpose is served.

EDITOR.



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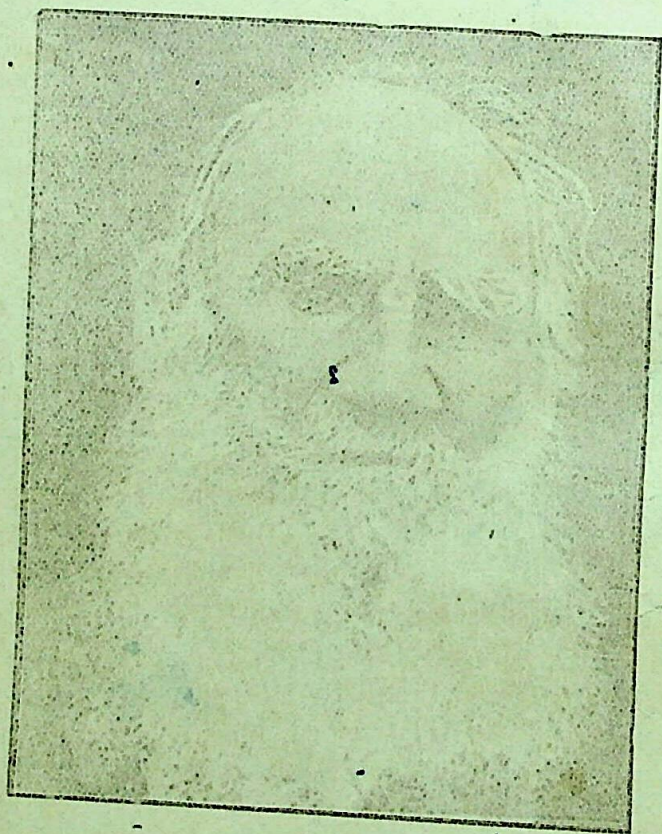
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Summary work and  
Brother's to-day in  
the way, and in the  
one operation, my  
Anathar and you  
many from one





LEO TOLSTOY



## WHY THERE IS EVIL IN THE WORLD

*Count Leo Tolstoy*

*Count Leo Tolstoy* (1828—1910) was one of the greatest Russian writers of the 19th century. He was a poet, novelist, social reformer and a religious mystic. Although he belonged to a wealthy family of the landowners, he had his sympathies with the poor peasants. He renounced his riches, and lived a life of poverty in order to practise what he preached. His writings brought to the notice of the world, the state of affairs in Russia. When he was old, he went with his family to live in the country. There he used to teach the children of the peasants. He wrote a number of stories for them. Mahatma Gandhi was much influenced by his idea of non-violence.

A Hermit lived in the forest, and the animals were not afraid of him. He and the wild animals used to talk together, and they understood one another.

Once the Hermit lay down under a tree, and a Raven, a Dove, a Stag and a Snake came to the same place to sleep.

The animals began to reason why evil should exist in the world.

The Raven said :—

“It is all owing to hunger that there is



evil in the world. (When we have as much as we wish to eat, we sit by ourselves on the bough and caw, and everything is good and gay, and we are in every respect well off; but some other day we are <sup>भयभीत</sup> famished, and everything is quite the opposite, so that we can see no brightness in God's world, and we feel full of unrest; we fly about from place to place, and there is no rest for us.) And even if we see some meat afar off, then it becomes still worse; for if we fly down to get it, either sticks and stones are thrown at us, or <sup>शत्रु</sup> wolves and dogs chase us, and we are absolutely destroyed. How much trouble comes upon us from hunger! All evil is <sup>उत्पन्न</sup> caused by it."

The Dove said :—

"In my <sup>अभिमत</sup> opinion, evil does not arise from hunger, but it all comes from love. If we only lived alone, we should have little trouble. <sup>दुःख</sup> (Wretchedness <sup>अनुभूति</sup> shared makes one doubly wretched.) And so we always live in pairs. And if we love our mates there is no peace for us at all. 'We are always thinking, 'Has she had enough to eat? Is she <sup>गर्म</sup> warm?' And when our mate is away from us anywhere, then we are wholly lost; we cannot help <sup>चिन्तित</sup> worrying all the time, 'If only the hawk does

not carry her off, or men make away with her; and we ourselves fly off in pursuit of her, and perhaps find the poor thing either in the hawk's claws or in the snare. And if our mate is lost, then there is no more comfort for us. We cannot eat, we cannot drink; we can only fly about and mourn. How many of us have perished in this way! No; evil comes not from hunger, but from love."

The Snake said :—

"No; evil arises neither from hunger nor from love, but from ill-temper. If we lived peacefully, we should not do so much harm; everything would be delightful for us. (But now if anything is done to us, we fall into a rage, and then there is nothing gentle about us; we only think how we can avenge the wrong on some one.) We lose control of ourselves and hiss, and try to bite some one. We would not have pity on any one, we would bite our own father and mother! It seems as if we could eat our own selves. The moment we begin to lose our temper we are undone. All the evil in the world arises from ill-temper."



The Stag said :—

"No ; not from ill-temper, and not from love, and not from hunger arises all the evil that is in the world, but evil arises from fear. If it were possible for us to live without fear, all would be well with us. We are swift-footed, and have great strength. With our antlers we can defend ourselves from little animals ; and we can run from the large ones. But it is impossible to escape fear. (If it is only the twigs creaking in the forest, or the leaves rustling, we are all of a tremble with fear, our heart beats, we instinctively start to run, and fly with all our might.) Another time a hare runs by or a bird flutters, or a dry twig crackles, and we think it is a wild beast, and in running away we really run into danger. And again we are running from a dog, and we come upon a man. Oftentimes we are frightened and start to flee, we don't know whither, and we roll over a precipice and perish. And we have to sleep with one eye open, with one ear alert and we are always in alarm. There is no peace. All evil comes from fear."

Then the Hermit said :—

"Not from hunger, nor from love, nor from

ill-temper, nor from fear come all our troubles; but all the evil that is in the world (is due to our different natures.) Hence come hunger and love, ill-temper and fear."

### Notes

1. **Antlers**—Branched horns of deer.
2. **Creaking**—Making a grating noise.
3. **Instinctively**—Naturally,
4. **Precipice**—Steep hill-side.

### COMPOSITION

1. Illustrate the use of the following in your own sentences :—

Well off ; carry off ; make away with ; in pursuit of ; come upon.

2. Frame sentences to distinguish between :—

Bough, bow ; rest, wrest ; meat, meet ; worse, verse ; throne, thrown ; absolute, obsolete ; peace, piece ; lost, last ; claws, clause ; perish, parish ; impossible, impassable.

3. What did the Raven, the Dove, the Stag and the Snake attribute the evil in this world to ?

4. What do you think is correct ? What is your opinion on this point ?

5. Explain the following :—"Wretchedness shared makes one doubly wretched."

### GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :—

(i) They understood *one another*.



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(ii) The animals began to reason why evil should exist in the world

(iii) We have as much as we wish.

2. Analyse the following :—

“And even if.....destroyed.”

3. Change the narration of the last paragraph in the lesson.

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## THE EARLY MEN

### Jawahar Lal Nehru

*Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru* (1888— ), the illustrious son of the late Pandit Moti Lal<sup>†</sup> Nehru, was educated at Harrow and Cambridge in England, and later called to the Bar at the Inner Temple. Born and brought up in wealth and luxury, Pandit Jawahar Lal became a true disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, and suffered all sorts of hardships and bereavement in the struggle of freedom. He was sent to jail several times, but undaunted, he pursued his ideal till the dawn of independence, when he was rightly chosen to be the first Premier of Free India. Even the foreigners have acknowledged his statesmanship and ability. We all know how ably he has been steering the ship of Free India through the troubled waters. May he live long to guide the nation! While in jail, he wrote a series of letters to his only daughter, Kumari Indra, (now Shrimati Firoz Gandhi), in which he traced briefly in simple language the story of the growth and development of human civilisation. He has a rare command over the English language. *His Autobiography, Glimpses of World History and The Discovery of India*, have established his reputation as a writer.

मुख्य फरक  
The chief difference between man and the other animals was the intelligence of man. This intelligence made him cleverer and stronger than enormous animals who would otherwise have destroyed him. As man's



intelligence grew so also grew his power. To ~~begin~~ begin with man had no special weapons to fight his enemies. He could only throw stones at them. Then he began to make out of stone axes, spears and many other things including fine stone needles. We saw many of these stone weapons in the South Kensington Museum and also in the museum in Geneva.

The Ice Age slowly ended and the glacier disappeared from Central Europe and Asia. As it became warmer men spread out.

In those days there were no houses or other buildings. People lived in caves. There was no cultivation, that is working in the fields. Men ate fruits and nuts and the animals they killed. They had no bread or rice because they did not grow anything in the fields. They did not know cooking but perhaps they just heated the meat on the big fires they had. They had no cooking vessels or pots and pans.

One thing is very curious. These savage men knew how to draw. Of course they had no paper or pens and pencils or brushes. They simply had their stone needles and pointed instruments. With these they scratched or



PT JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU



gaurakul

harabap

Mothilal

gaurakul

Banaras

Lanka

Assi

Ramawati ji

Paraday

V. P. Shukh Bazar

Murti

drew animals on the walls of caves. Some of their drawings are quite good but they are almost all profiles. You know that it is easier to draw profiles and children usually draw in this way. As the caves must have been dark, it is probable that they used some kind of simple lamp.

These men that we have described are called the Palaeolithic men of the old Stone Age. That period is called the Stone Age because men made all their tools with stone. They did not know how to use the metals. To-day most of your things are made of metals, specially iron. But iron or bronze was not known then, and so stone, which is much more difficult to work with, was used.

Before the Stone Age came to an end the climate of the world changed greatly and became much warmer. The glaciers had gone far back to the Arctic Ocean and in Central Asia and Europe great forests arose. Among these forests we find a new race of men living. These people were cleverer in many ways than the Palaeolithic men whom we have just described. But they still made their tools out of stone. These men also belonged to the Stone Age but it was the later Stone Age.



They are called Neolithic men or men of the new Stone Age.

We find when examining these Neolithic men that great progress has been made. (The intelligence of man is making him go ahead quite fast compared to the other animals. These Neolithic men made the very great discovery of cultivation.) They started tilling fields and growing their food there. This was a great thing for them. They could now get their food more easily instead of having to hunt animals all the time. They got more leisure, more time to rest and think. And the more leisure they had the more progress they made in discovering new things and methods. They started making earthen pots and with the help of these they began to cook their food. The stone tools were much better and were beautifully polished. They also knew how to tame animals like the cow, the dog, the sheep, and the goat. They also knew how to weave.

They used to live in houses or huts. These huts were very often made in the middle of lakes as the wild animals or other men could not attack them easily there. These people are therefore called lake-dwellers.

You will wonder how we know so much about these people. They wrote no books of history. But I have already told you that the Bible is the great book of nature. It is not easy to read it. It requires great patience. Many people have spent their lives in trying to read this book and they have collected large numbers of fossils and other remains of old times. These fossils are collected together in the great museums and we can see there the fine polished axes and the pots and stone arrows and needles and many other things which were made by the Neolithic man. You have seen many of these things yourself but perhaps you have forgotten them. If you see them again you will be able to understand them better.

There was, I remember, a very good model of a lake dwelling in the Geneva Museum. Wooden poles were stuck in the lake and on top of these poles a wooden platform was made. On the platform the wooden huts were put up and the whole thing was connected by a little bridge to the land.

These Neolithic men clothed themselves with the skins of animals or sometimes with :



rough cloth of flax. Flax is a plant which has a good fibre used for making cloth. Linen is now made out of flax. But in those days cloth of flax must have been very rough.

These men went on making progress. They started making tools of copper and of bronze. Bronze as you know is a mixture of copper and tin and is harder than either of these. They also used gold and were vain enough to make ornaments out of it!

ofh These people must have lived about 10,000 years ago. Of course we do not know the exact dates or periods. All this is largely guesswork. You will notice that so far we have been talking of millions of years. We are now slowly gradually getting nearer and nearer to our present age. From the Neolithic man to the man to-day there is no break or sudden change. But still we are very different from him. The changes came slowly, as is Nature's way. Different races developed and each race went its own way and lived its own life. The climate being different in different parts of the world, people had to adapt themselves to it and changed greatly. But we shall talk about this later.

One thing more I want to tell you to-day. About the end of the Neolithic age a very great disaster happened to man. I have told you already that at that time the Mediterranean was not a sea at all. There were just some lakes there and in these lakes many people lived. Suddenly the land near Gibraltar between Europe and Africa was washed away and the waters of the Atlantic Ocean poured into the low valley of the Mediterranean. The water went on pouring and filling it up and large numbers of the men and women living near or over the lakes must have been drowned. They could not escape anywhere. There was water all over the place for hundreds of miles. The Atlantic Ocean continued to pour in till it had filled up the valley and the Mediterranean Sea came into existence.

You have heard, of course, and perhaps read, about the great flood. The Bible speaks about it and some of our Sanskrit books also refer to it. It may be that this mighty flood was the filling up of the Mediterranean. It was such a terrible disaster that the few people who managed to escape must have told all about it to their children, and their



children remembered it and told the story their own children and so the story was handed down from generation to generation.

## Notes

1. **Glacier**—a slowly moving river of ice.
2. **Profiles**—outline.
3. **Fossil**—the petrified remains of an animal or vegetable found embedded in the strata of the earth's crust.

## COMPOSITION

1. Frame sentences to distinguish between :—  
difference, deference; vessel, vassal; probable, possible; adapt, adopt, adept.
2. Use 'put up' in a sentence.
3. Describe (a) the Palaeolithic men (b) Neolithic men.
4. How did the Mediterranean Sea come into existence?

## GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :  
The intelligence made him *cleverer than enormous animals*. It is *easier* to draw profiles. They started *tilling* fields. Each race lived its *own* life.
2. Analyse :— (a) But I have already told.....  
..... nature' .....  
(b) It was such a terrible disaster .....  
..... generati.....

## PHILEMON AND BAUCIS

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804—64) was born at Salem Massachusetts (America). He lost his father, a merchant Captain, when he was only four years old. Hawthorne was an imaginative and sensitive boy. He was fond of retirement where he could find ample scope for serious study and acquisition of knowledge. He took his degree in 1125 along with Longfellow. He stored his mind with the best things in English literature. His favourite books were Spencer's *Faerie Queen* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. He was one of the greatest novelists. His famous novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, is considered the greatest work of imagination yet produced by any American. Hawthorne ranks as one of the greatest writers of short stories. His famous collections of stories are *The Wonder Book*, *Tanglewood Tales* and *Twice-Told Tales*.

One evening, in times long ago, old Philemon and his wife Baucis sat at their cottage door enjoying the calm and beautiful sunset. They had already eaten their frugal supper, and intended now to spend a quiet hour or two before bed-time. So they talked together about their garden, and their cow, and their bees, and their grape-vine which clambered over the cottage wall, and on which the grapes were beginning to turn purple. But the



rude shouts of children and the fierce barking of dogs in the village near at hand grew louder and louder, until, at last, it was hardly possible for Baucis and Philemon to hear each other speak.

"Ah, wife," cried Philemon, "I fear some poor traveller is seeking hospitality among our neighbours yonder, and, instead of giving him food and lodging, they have set their dogs at him, as their custom is!"

"Well-a-day!" answered old Baucis, "do wish our neighbours felt a little more kindness for their fellow-creatures. And only think of bringing up their children in this naughty way, and patting them on the head when they fling stones at strangers!"

"To tell you the truth, wife," said Philemon, shaking his white head, "I should no wonder if some terrible thing were to happen to all the people in the village, unless they mend their manners. But as far as you and I are concerned, as long as Providence afford us a crust of bread, let us be ready to give half to any poor homeless stranger that may come along and need it."

"That's right, husband," said Baucis, "So we will!"

people

..

These folks were quite poor, and had to work pretty hard for a living. Old Philemon toiled diligently in his garden, while Baucis was always busy with her distaff, or making a little butter and cheese with their cow's milk, or doing one thing or another about the cottage. Their food was seldom any thing but bread, milk and vegetables, with sometimes a portion of honey from their beehive, and, now and then, a bunch of grapes that had ripened against the cottage wall.

• But they were two of the kindest people in the world, and would cheerfully have gone without their dinners any day rather than refuse a slice of their brown loaf, a cup of new milk, and a spoonful of honey to the weary traveller who might pause before their door. They felt as if such guests had a sort of holiness, and that they ought, therefore, to treat them better and more bountifully than their own selves.

Their cottage stood on a rising piece of ground at some short distance from a village, which lay in a hollow valley that was about half a mile in breadth. This valley, in past ages, when the world was new, had probably been the bed of a lake. There, fishes had



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glided to and fro in the depths, and water-  
 weeds had grown along the margin, and trees  
 and hills had seen their reflected images in  
 the broad and peaceful mirror. But as the  
 waters subsided men had cultivated the soil,  
 and built houses on it, so that it was now a  
 fertile spot, and bore no traces of the ancient  
 lake, except a very small brook which mean-  
 dered through the midst of the village, and  
 supplied the inhabitants with water. The  
 valley had been dry land so long that oaks had  
 sprung up, and grown very high, and perished  
 with old age, and been succeeded by others  
 as tall and stately as the first. Never was  
 there a prettier or more fruitful valley. The  
 very sight of the plenty around them should  
 have made the inhabitants kind and gentle,  
 and ready to show their gratitude to Provi-  
 dence by doing good to their fellow-creatures.

But the people of this lovely village were  
 not worthy to dwell in a spot on which Heaven  
 had smiled so beneficently. They were a very  
 selfish and hard-hearted people, and had no  
 pity for the poor, nor sympathy for the home-  
 less. They would only have laughed had any-  
 body told them that human beings owe a debt  
 of love to one another, because there is no go-

other method of paying the debt of love and care which all of us owe to Providence. They taught their children to be no better than themselves, and used to <sup>प्र-वि-य-ति</sup> clap their hands by way of encouragement when they saw the little boys and girls run after some poor stranger, shouting at his heels and pelting him with stones. They kept large and fierce dogs, and whenever a traveller ventured to show himself in the village street, this pack of disagreeable curs scampered to meet him, barking, <sup>आ-वा-ज</sup> snarling, and showing their teeth. They then would seize him by his leg, or by his clothes. just as it happened; and if he were ragged when he came, he was generally a pitiable object before he had time to run away.

So now you can understand why old Philemon spoke so sorrowfully when he heard the shouts of the children and the barking of the dogs at the farther <sup>दूर-त-क</sup> extremity of the village street. There was a <sup>मिश्रित</sup> confused din which lasted a good while, and seemed to pass quite through the breadth of the valley.

"I never heard the dogs so loud!" <sup>पुनः कथित</sup> observed <sup>अतः</sup> the good old man.

"Nor the children so rude!" answered the good old wife.



*my brother had gone to the market - for purchasing*  
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20

*you know?*  
They sat shaking their heads one to another, while the noise came nearer and nearer, until, at the foot of the little eminence on which their cottage stood, they saw two travellers approaching on foot. Close behind them came the fierce dogs, snarling at their very heels. A little farther off, ran a crowd of children who sent up shrill cries, and flung stones at the two strangers with all their might. Once or twice, the younger of the two men (he was a slender and very active figure) turned about and drove back the dogs with a staff which he carried in his hand. His companion, who was a very tall person, walked calmly along, as if disdaining to notice either the naughty children or the pack of curs whose manners the children seemed to imitate.

*अब* Both of the travellers were very humbly glad, and looked as if they might not have money enough in their pockets to pay for a night's lodging. And this, I am afraid, was the reason why the villagers had allowed their children and dogs to treat them so rudely.

"Come, wife," said Philemon to Baucis "let us go and meet these poor people. No doubt they feel almost too heavy-hearted to climb the hill."

*गुरु*

"Go you and meet them" answered Baucis, "while I make haste within door, and see whether we can get them anything for supper. A comfortable bowl of bread-and-milk would do wonders towards raising their spirits."

Accordingly she hastened into the cottage. Philemon, on his part, went forward, and <sup>with a</sup> ~~extended~~ <sup>pleasant</sup> his hand with so hospitable an aspect that there was no need of saying, what nevertheless he did say, in the heartiest tone imaginable :

"Welcome, strangers welcome !"

"Thank you !" replied the younger of the two, in a lively kind of way, notwithstanding his weariness and trouble. "This is quite another greeting than we have met with yonder in the village. Pray, why do you live in such a bad neighbourhood ?"

"Ah !", observed old Philemon, with a quiet and <sup>kind</sup> ~~benign~~ smile, "Providence put me here. I hope, among other reasons, in order that I may make you what <sup>the best</sup> ~~amends~~ I can, for the inhospitality of my neighbours."

"Well said, old father !" cried the traveller, laughing; "and if the truth must be told my companion and myself need some amends."

Reception



Those children have bespattered us finely with their mud-balls, and one of the curs has <sup>badly</sup> torn my cloak, which was <sup>very</sup> ragged enough already. But I took him across the muzzle with my staff, and I think you may have heard him <sup>very</sup> yell even thus far off."

Philemon was glad to see him in such good spirits; nor, indeed, would you have <sup>wished</sup> fancied, by the traveller's look and manner, that he was weary with a long day's journey, besides being disheartened by rough treatment at the end of it. He was dressed in rather an old way, with a sort of cap on his head, the brim of which <sup>technical name</sup> stuck out over both ears. Though it was a summer evening he wore a cloak which he kept <sup>on his arm</sup> wrapped closely about him, perhaps because his under-garments were <sup>very</sup> shabby. Philemon perceived, too, that he had on a singular <sup>pair</sup> pair of shoes; but as it was now growing dusk, and as the old man's <sup>eyesight</sup> eyesight was none the sharpest, he could not <sup>very</sup> precisely tell in what the strangeness consisted. One thing, certainly, seemed queer. The traveller was so wonderfully light and active that it appeared as if his feet sometimes rose from the ground of their <sup>own</sup> own accord, or could only be kept down by an effort.

हलन्तु। पतल पतल।

"I used to be light-footed in my youth," said Philemon to the traveller, "but I always found my feet grow heavier towards nightfall."

"There is nothing like a good staff to help me along," answered the stranger; "and I happen to have an excellent one, as you can see."

This staff, in fact, was the <sup>नया</sup> oddest-looking staff that Philemon had ever <sup>काम</sup> beheld. It was made of olive-wood, and had something like a little pair of wings near the top. Two <sup>पतल</sup> snakes, carved in the wood, were <sup>मार्ग</sup> represented as twining themselves about the staff, and were so very skilfully <sup>मार्ग</sup> executed that old Philemon almost thought them alive, and that he could see them <sup>मार्ग</sup> wriggling and twisting.

"A curious piece of work, sure enough!" said he. "A staff with wings! It would be an excellent kind of stick for a little boy to ride astride of!"

By this time Philemon and his two guests had reached the cottage door.

"Friends," said the old man, "sit down and rest yourselves here on this bench. My good wife, Baucis, has gone to see what you can

engraved- ५१६.३५



have for supper. We are poor <sup>people</sup> folks, but you shall be welcome to whatever we have in the cup-board." <sup>wonder</sup>

The young stranger threw himself carelessly on the bench, letting his staff fall as he did so. And here happened something rather <sup>wonder</sup> marvellous, though <sup>simple</sup> trifling enough too. The staff seemed to get up from the ground of its own accord, and spreading its little pair of wings, it half-hopped, half-flew, and <sup>flung</sup> leaned itself against the wall of the cottage. There it stood quite still, except that the snakes continued to wriggle.

Before Philemon could ask any questions, the elder stranger drew his attention from the wonderful staff by speaking to him.

"Was there not," asked the stranger in a remarkably deep tone of voice, "a lake, in very ancient times, covering the spot where now stands yonder village?"

"Not in my day, friend," answered Philemon: "and yet I am an old man, as you see. There were always the fields and <sup>meadows</sup> meadows, just as they are now, and the old trees, and the little <sup>stream</sup> stream murmuring through the midst of the valley. My father, nor his father before him, ever saw it otherwise, so far as I

know; and doubtless it will still be the same when old Philemon shall be gone and forgotten!"

"That is more than can be safely foretold" observed the stranger: and there was something very stern in his deep voice. He shook his head, too, so that his dark and heavy curls <sup>of hair</sup> were shaken with the movement. "Since the inhabitants of yonder village have forgotten the affections and sympathies of their nature, it were better that the lake should be rippling over their dwellings again!"

The traveller looked so stern, that Philemon was really almost frightened, the more so that at his frown the <sup>reflected light</sup> twilight seemed suddenly to grow darker, and that when he shook his head, there was a roll as of thunder in the air.

But a moment afterwards, the stranger's face became so kindly and mild that the old man quite forgot his terror. Nevertheless he could not help feeling that this chief traveller must be no ordinary personage, although he happened now to be <sup>so</sup> attired so humbly, and to be journeying on foot. Not that Philemon fancied him a prince in disguise, or any character of that sort; but rather some



exceedingly wise man, who went about the world in this poor garb, despising wealth and all worldly objects, and seeking everywhere to add a mite to his wisdom. This idea appeared the more probable because when Philemon raised his eyes to the stranger's face he seemed to see more thought there, in one look than he could have studied in a lifetime.

While Baucis was getting the supper, the travellers both began to talk very sociably with Philemon. The younger, indeed, was extremely lively and made such shrewd and witty remarks that the good old man continually burst out a-laughing, and pronounced him the merriest fellow whom he had seen for many a day.

"Pray, my young friend," said he as they grew familiar together, "what may your name be?"

"Why, I am very nimble, as you see," answered the traveller. "So if you call me Hermes, the name will fit tolerably well."

"Hermes, Hermes?" repeated Philemon looking in the traveller's face to see if he were making fun of him. "It is a very odd name. And your companion there, has he as strange a one?"

th "You must ask the thunder to tell it to  
anrou!" replied Hermes, putting on a mysterious  
e took. "No other voice is loud enough."

re This remark, whether it were serious or in  
most, might have caused Philemon to conceive  
em very great awe of the elder stranger if, on  
okenturing to gaze at him, he had not beheld so  
much beneficence in his visage. But, undoub-  
thedly, here was the grandest figure that ever  
blat beside a cottage door. When the stranger  
wa conversed, it was with gravity, and in such a  
an way that Philemon felt irresistibly moved to  
or ell him everything which he had most at  
ce heart. This is always the feeling that people  
fe ave, when they meet with any one wise  
nough to comprehend all their good and evil,  
nd to despise not a little of it.

But Philemon, simple and kind-hearted old  
man that he was, had not many secrets to dis-  
lose. He talked, however, quite garrulously  
about the events of his past life, in the whole  
course of which, he had never been a score of  
miles from this very spot. His wife Baucis  
nd himself, had dwelt in the cottage from  
their youth upward, earning their bread by  
onest labour, always poor, but still contented.  
e told what excellent butter and cheese



Baucis made, and how nice were the vegetables which he raised in his garden. He said too, that because they loved one another very much, it was the wish of both that death might not separate them but that they should die, as they had lived, together.

As the stranger listened, a smile beamed over his countenance and made its expression very sweet.

"You are a good old man," said he Philemon, "and you have a good old wife, be your help-mate. It is fit that your wish be granted."

And it seemed to Philemon just then as the sunset clouds threw up a bright flash from the west, and kindled a sudden light in the sky.

Baucis had now got supper ready, and coming to the door, began to make apology for the poor fare which she was forced to serve before her guests.

"Had we known you were coming," said she, "my goodman and myself would have gone without a morsel, rather than you should lack a better supper. But I took the most part of today's milk to make cheese; and of the

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ast loaf is already half-eaten. Ah me! I  
ever feel the sorrow of being poor save when  
poor traveller knocks at our door."

"All will be very well; do not trouble  
yourself, my good dame," replied the elder  
stranger kindly. "An honest, hearty welcome  
to a guest works miracles with the fare, and  
is capable of turning the coarsest food to  
nectar and ambrosia."

"A welcome you shall have," cried Baucis,  
"and like-wise a little honey that we happen  
to have kept; and a bunch of purple grapes  
besides."

"Why Mother Baucis, it is a feast!" ex-  
claimed Hermes, laughing, "an absolute feast!  
and you shall see how bravely I will play my  
part at it! I think I never felt hungrier in  
my life."

Hermes's staff, you recollect, had set itself  
up against the wall of the cottage. Well,  
when its master entered the door, leaving this  
wonderful staff behind, what should it do, but  
immediately spread its little wings, and go  
hopping and fluttering up the door-steps!  
Tap, tap, went the staff on the kitchen floor;  
nor did it rest until it had stood itself on end,



with the greatest gravity and decorum, but beside Hermes's chair. Old Philemon, however, as well as his wife, was so taken up in attending to their guests that no notice was given what the staff had been about.

As Baucis had said, there was but a scanty supper for two hungry travellers. In the middle of the table was the remnant of a brown loaf, with a piece of cheese on one side of it and a dish of honey-comb on the other. There was a pretty good bunch of grapes for each of the guests. A moderately-sized earthen pitcher, nearly full of milk, stood at the corner of the board; and when Baucis had filled two bowls, and set them before the strangers, only a little milk remained in the bottom of the pitcher. Alas! it is a very sad business when the bountiful heart finds itself pinched and squeezed among narrow circumstances. Poor Baucis kept wishing that she might starve for a week to come, if it were possible by so doing to provide these hungry folks with a more plentiful supper.

And, since the supper was so exceedingly small, she could not help wishing that their appetites had not been quite so large. What

at their very first sitting down, the travellers  
smooth drank off all the milk in their two bowls  
without a draught.

"A little more milk, kind Mother Baucis,  
if you please," said Hermes. "The day has  
been hot, and I am very much athirst."

"Now, my dear people," answered Baucis  
in great confusion, "I am so sorry and ashamed!  
But the truth is, there is hardly a drop  
more milk in the pitcher. O husband, hus-  
band! why didn't we go without our supper?"

"Why, it appears to me," said Hermes,  
starting up from table and taking the pitcher  
by the handle, "it really appears to me that  
matters are not quite so bad as you represent  
them. Here is certainly more milk in the  
pitcher."

So saying, and to the vast astonishment of  
Baucis, he proceeded to fill, not only his own  
bowl, but his companion's likewise, from the  
pitcher that was supposed to be almost empty.  
The good woman could scarcely believe her  
eyes. She had certainly poured out nearly  
all the milk, and had peeped in afterwards and  
seen the bottom of the pitcher as she set it  
down upon the table.



## EASIER PROSE SELECTIONS

"But I am old," thought Baucis to herself "and apt to be forgetful. I suppose I must have made a mistake. At all events, the pitcher cannot help being empty now, after filling the bowls twice over."

"Why, what excellent milk!", observed Hermes, after quaffing the contents of the second bowl. "Excuse me, my kind hostess, but I must really ask you for a little more."

Now Baucis had seen, as plainly as she could see anything, that Hermes had turned the pitcher upside down, and consequently had poured out every drop of milk in filling the last bowl. Of course there could not possibly be any left. However, in order to let him know precisely how the case was, she lifted the pitcher, and made a gesture as if pouring milk into Hermes's bowl, but without the remotest idea that any milk would stream forth. What was her surprise, therefore, when such an abundant cascade fell bubbling into the bowl that it was immediately filled to the brim and overflowed upon the table. The two snakes that were twisted about Hermes's staff (but neither Baucis nor Philomena happened to observe this circumstance

stretched out their heads and began to lap up the spilt milk.

And then what a delicious fragrance the milk had ! It seemed as if Philemon's only cow must have pastured that day on the richest herbage that could be found anywhere in the world.

"And now a slice of your brown loaf, Mother Baucis," said Hermes, "and a little of that honey !"

Baucis cut him a slice accordingly.. and though the loaf, when she and her husband ate of it, had been rather too dry and crusty to be palatable, was now as light and moist, as if out a few hours out of the oven. Tasting a crumb which had fallen on the table, she found it more delicious than bread ever was before, and could hardly believe that it was a loaf of her own kneading and baking. Yet what other loaf could it possibly be ?

But oh, the honey ! I may just as well let it alone without trying to describe how exquisitely it smelt and looked.

Although good Mother Baucis was a simple, old dame, she could not but think that there was something rather out of the com-



mon way in all that had been going on. So just after helping the guests to bread and honey, and laying a bunch of grapes by each of their plates she sat down by Philemon, and told him what she had seen, in a whisper.

"Did you ever hear the like?" asked she.

"No, I never did," answered Philemon with a smile. "And I rather think, my dear old wife, you have been walking about in a sort of dream. If I had poured out the milk I should have seen through the business at once. There happened to be a little more in the pitcher than you thought, that is all."

"Ah, husband" said Baucis, "say what you will, these are very uncommon people!"

"Well, well," replied Philemon, still smiling, "perhaps they are. They certainly look as if they had seen better days; and I am heartily glad to see them making so comfortable a supper."

Each of the guests had now taken a bunch of grapes upon his plate. Baucis (while she rubbed her eyes in order to see more clearly) was of opinion that the clusters had grown larger and richer; and that each separate grape seemed to be on the point of bursting with ripeness.

So juice. It was entirely a mystery to her how such grapes could ever have been produced from the old stunted vines that climbed against the cottage wall.

"Very admirable grapes these!" observed Hermes, as he swallowed one after another, without apparently diminishing his cluster. "Pray, my good host, whence did you gather them?"

"From my own vine," answered Philemon. "You may see one of its branches twisting across the window yonder. But wife and I never thought the grapes very fine ones."

"I never tasted better," said the guest. "Another cup of this delicious milk, if you please, and I shall then have supped better than a prince."

This time old Philemon bestirred himself and took up the pitcher; for he was curious to discover whether there was any reality in the marvels which Baucis had whispered to him. He knew that his good old wife was incapable of falsehood, and that she was seldom mistaken in what she supposed to be true; but this was so very singular a case that he wanted to see into it with his own eyes. On taking up the



pitcher, therefore, he slyly peeped into it, and was fully satisfied that it contained not so much as a single drop. All at once, however, he beheld a little white fountain, which gushed up from the bottom of the pitcher, and speedily filled it to the brim with foaming and deliciously fragrant milk. It was lucky that Philemon, in his surprise, did not drop the miraculous pitcher from his hand.

"Who are ye, wonder-working strangers?" cried he, even more bewildered than his wife had been.

"Your guests, my good Philemon, and your friends," replied the elder traveller in his mild deep voice, that had something at once sweet and awe-inspiring in it. "Give me likewise a cup of the milk; and may your pitcher never be empty for kind Baucis and yourself, and more than for the needy way-farer!"

The supper being now over, the stranger requested to be shown to their place of repose. The old people would gladly have talked with them a little longer, and have expressed their wonder which they felt, and their delight at finding the poor and meagre supper prove so much better and more abundant than the

hoped, but the elder traveller had inspired them with such reverence that they dared not ask him any questions. And when Philemon drew Hermes aside, and enquired how under the sun a fountain of milk could have got into an old earthen pitcher, this latter personage pointed to his staff.

"There is the whole mystery of the affair," quoth Hermes; "and if you can make it out, I'll thank you to let me know. I can't tell what to make of my staff. It is always playing such odd tricks as this—sometimes getting me a supper, and quite as often stealing it away. If I had any faith in such nonsense, I should say the stick was bewitched!"

He said no more, but looked so slyly in their faces that they rather fancied he was laughing at them. The magic staff went hopping at his heels as Hermes quitted the room. When left alone, the good old couple spent some little time in conversation about the events of the evening, and then lay down on the floor and fell fast asleep. They had given up their sleeping-room to the guests and had no other bed for themselves save these planks,



which I wish had been as soft as their own hearts.

✓ The old man and his wife were <sup>उत्थन</sup> stirring be-  
times in the morning and the strangers like-  
wise <sup>उठना</sup> arose with the sun, and made their  
preparations to depart. Philemon <sup>गमन</sup> hospitably  
entreated them to remain a little longer, until  
Baucis could milk the cow and bake a cake  
upon the hearth, and perhaps find them a few  
fresh <sup>अंडे</sup> eggs for breakfast. The guests, how-  
ever, seemed to think it better to <sup>करना</sup> accomplish a  
good part of their journey before the heat of  
the day should come on. They therefore per-  
<sup>नहीं</sup> sisted in <sup>जाना</sup> setting out immediately, but asked  
Philemon and Baucis to walk forth with them  
a short distance, and show them the road  
which they were to take.

"Ah me! well-a-day!" exclaimed Phile-  
mon, when they had walked a little way from  
their door, "if our neighbours only knew what  
a blessed thing it is to <sup>करना</sup> show hospitality to  
strangers, they would <sup>बँधना</sup> tie up all their dogs, and  
never allow their children to fling another  
stone."

<sup>गमन</sup> "It is a sin and shame for them to behave as  
they do!" cried good old Baucis vehemently

"And I mean to go this very day and tell some of them what naughty people they are."

"I fear," remarked Hermes, slyly smiling, "that you will find none of them at home."

The elder traveller's brow just then assumed such a grave, stern, and awful grandeur, yet serene withal, that neither Baucis nor Philemon dared to speak a word. They gazed reverently into his face as if they had been gazing at the sky.

"When men do not feel towards the humblest stranger as if he were a brother," said the traveller in tones so deep that they sounded like those of an organ, "they are unworthy to exist on earth which was created as the abode of a great human brotherhood."

"And, by the by, my dear old people," cried Hermes, with the liveliest look of fun and mischief in his eyes, "where is this same village that you talk about? On which side of us does it lie? Methinks I do not see it hereabouts."

Philemon and his wife trudged towards the valley, where at sunset, only the day before, they had seen the meadows, the houses, the gardens, the clumps of trees, the wide, green-



margined street, with children playing in it, and all the tokens of business, enjoyment and prosperity. But what was their astonishment!—there was no longer any appearance of a village! Even the fertile valley, in the hollow of which it lay, had <sup>ceased</sup> to have existence. In its <sup>stead</sup>, they beheld the broad blue surface of a lake, which filled the greater basin of the valley from brim to brim, and reflected the surrounding hills in its bosom with as tranquil an image as if it had been there ever since the creation of the world. For an instant the lake remained perfectly smooth. Then a little breeze sprang up, and caused the water to dance, glitter, and sparkle in the early sunbeams and to dash with a pleasant rippling murmur against the hither shore.

The lake seemed so strangely familiar that the old couple were greatly perplexed, and felt as if they could only have been dreaming about a village having lain there. But the next moment they remembered the vanished dwellings, and faces and characters of the inhabitants, far too distinctly for a dream. The village had been there yesterday, and now was gone.

"Alas" cried these kind-hearted old people, and what has become of our poor neighbours?" "They exist no longer as men and women," said the elder traveller in his grand and deep voice, while a roll of thunder seemed to echo at a distance.

"And as for those foolish people," said Philemon with his mischievous smile, "they are all transformed to fishes. There needed but a little change, for they were already a bad set of rascals, and the coldest-blooded things in existence. So, kind Mother Baucis, whenever you or your husband have an appetite for a dish of broiled trout, he can throw in a line and pull out half a dozen of our old neighbours."

"Ah," cried Baucis, shuddering, "I would not for the world put one of them on the spit-iron!"

"No" added Philemon making a wry face, "we could never relish them!"

"As for you, good Philemon," continued the elder traveller, "and you, kind Baucis, you, with your scanty means, have mingled so much heartfelt hospitality with your entertainment of the homeless stranger that the milk became an inexhaustible fount of nectar."



and the brown loaf, and the honey <sup>ambrosia</sup>. Thus the divinities have feasted on your board off the same viands that supped on their banquets on Olympus. You have welcomed well, my dear old friends; therefore request whatever favour you have most at heart; it is granted."

Philemon and Baucis looked at one another and then—I know not which of the two it was who spoke, but that one uttered the desire which both their hearts.

"Let us live together while we live, and leave the world at the same instant when we die, for we have always loved one another."

"Be it so!" replied the stranger with majestic kindness. "Now look towards my cottage!"

They did so. But what was their surprise on beholding a tall edifice of white marble with a wide-open portal, occupying the place where their humble residence had so lately stood!

"There is your home," said the stranger, beneficently smiling on them both. "Exchange your hospitality in yonder palace as freely in the poor hovel to which you welcomed me last evening."

The old folks fell on their knees to thank him, but, behold ! neither he nor Hermes were here.

So Philemon and Baucis <sup>took</sup> up their residence in the marble palace, and spent their time, with vast satisfaction to themselves, in making everybody who happened to pass that way comfortable. The milk-pitcher, I must not forget to say, retained its marvellous quality of being never empty when it was desirable to have it full. Whenever an honest, good-humoured, and free-hearted guest took a draught from this pitcher, he invariably found it the sweetest and most invigorating fluid that ever ran down his throat. But if a cross and disagreeable curmudgeon happened to slip, he was pretty certain to twist his visage into a hard knot, and pronounce it a pitcher of sour milk !

Thus the old couple lived in their palace a great, great while, and grew older and older, and very old indeed. At length, however, there came a summer morning when Philemon and Baucis failed to make their appearance, as on other mornings, with one hospitable smile over-spreading both their pleasant faces.





But as the breeze grew stronger, the trees both spoke at once ; "Philemon ! Baucis ! Baucis !" — as if one were both and both were one, and talking together in the depths of their mutual heart. It was plain enough to perceive that the good old couple had renewed their youth, and were now to spend a quiet, and delightful hundred years or so, Philemon as an oak and Baucis as a lime-tree. And oh, what a hospitable shade did they fling round them ! Whenever a wayfarer paused beneath it, he heard a pleasant whisper of the leaves above his head, and wondered how the sound should so much resemble words like these :

"Welcome, welcome, dear traveller, welcome."

And some kind soul, that knew what would have pleased old Baucis and old Philemon best, wove a circular seat around both their trunks, where, for a great while afterwards, the weary and the hungry and the thirsty used to repose themselves and quaff milk abundantly out of the miraculous pitcher.



## Notes

1. **Well-a-day**—an interjection expressing grief.
2. **Distaff**—the staff holding the bunch of wool in spinning.
3. **Meandered**—flowed in a circuitous manner.
4. **Muzzle**—the snout of an animal like that of a dog.
5. **Hermes**—son of Zeus, messenger of the gods.
6. **Ambrosia**—food of the gods.
7. **Arbour**—a garden nook sheltered among trees.
8. **Cascade**—a water-fall, here it means a continuous flow.
9. **Trout**—a fresh water fish of delicate flavour.
10. **Gridiron**—a device with iron bars on which meat is grilled over fire.
11. **Viands**—delicious food served.
12. **Olympus**—heaven (Olympus is the divine abode of the Greek gods.)
13. **Curmudgeon**—a vulgar, ill-tempered person.

## COMPOSITION

- ✓1. Frame sentences to distinguish between —  
Quiet, quite ; wine, vine ; pause, paws ; might, mite ; marvel, marble ; jest, zest ; coarse, course ; accomplish, accomplice.
- ✓2. Illustrate the use of the following in your own sentences :—  
At hand ; bring up ; now and then ; to and fro ; make amends ; of one's own accord ; make fun of ; work miracles ; give up ; by-the-by.

3. Explain :—Frugal supper ; confused din ; benign smile ; shrewd and witty remarks ; awful grandeur.
4. Explain :—(i) Not that Philemon.....life time.  
 (ii) What marks.....the prince.  
 (iii) There was.....sky .  
 (iv) That is more.....again.
5. Describe the character of (a) Philemon, (b) Baucis and (c) the neighbours. ✓
6. Describe the end of Philemon, Baucis and their neighbours. ✓
7. What miracles did the strangers perform ? ✓
8. What do you learn from this story ? ✓

## GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :—  
 It was hardly *possible* to *hear each other speak*. *Instead giving* him food and *lodging* they have set their dogs him as their custom | is. Their food was *anything but* *good*. They had gone without their dinners *any day other than refuse* a slice of their brown loaf. They had *other* beds *save* these planks, which I wish had been as *fit as their own hearts*!
2. Analyse :—(i) But as far as.....need it.  
 (ii) The valley.....first.  
 (iii) They would have laughed.....  
 .....Providence.
3. Change the narration of the speech between Philemon and the strangers.



## THE SWEET SINGER OF RAJPUTANA

*Dr. Annie Besant*

*Dr. Annie Besant* (1847—1933) was an Irish woman who devoted best part of her life to the service of India. She began her public life as a free thinker. In 1889 she joined the Theosophical Society, and she was the president of the society from 1907 till her death. She took a prominent part in the Indian National Movement, and was elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1917. She was a gifted orator and a prolific writer. Her greatest service to India was in the sphere of education. Her religious, social and political writings and speeches fill many volumes but the most interesting for us are *Ancient Wisdom, The Wisdom of the Upanishads* and *Children of the Motherland*.

In the old dominions of Marwar was a small village—Merata—where, to Ratan Singh of Merata, grandson of Jodha, Rahtore Ruler of Marwar, was born a daughter (S. 1573. A.D. 1517). Quite and dreamy, the first words from her sweet baby lips uttered were lispings of praises of Shri Krishna. (Later, as she played with dolls and toys about her, she made them serve as *murtis* of the Divine, and she sang a joyous melody of the love that was in her heart—rich harvest gathered after many births of deep, true devotion.) (The little one—Mira)

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DR. ANNIE BESANT



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—clever and of exceeding beauty, yet humble and graciously tender to one and all, new to maidenhood with ever-increasing devotion to her Lord. "The time is ripe for the maid to marry," said her parents, and they sought her fitting husband. But when to Tirabai came word of their intent, straight to her mother she ~~went~~ <sup>with little tender hands</sup> ~~folded~~ <sup>folded</sup>, entreated: "Mataji, hear my prayer. Parameshvara has made men to worship and to serve Him. In Maya though immersed, yet 'tis not for men to forget Him—the Supreme. Food, drink, and clothing seek those who marry. He is no longer their first thought. Therefore, beloved mother, plunge me not into the miseries of marriage."

"Child," the mother answered, "these are not fit words for the lips of maids. What now they of marriage? Thy parents will choose the best for thee; thou hast but to obey."

Big tears filled her dark shining eyes as Tirabai turned away. "Alas," she thought, who will understand that I long for the hard life of the devotee, with its many renuncia- <sup>tions</sup> ~~tions~~. I care nought for the delights that are howered upon the Queens of stately palaces.



Nay, dear Lord, never will I forsake worship of Thee. Ever will I live utterly humble and utterly devoted to Thee. Let come what will I vow to serve Thee ever, Thy servant, and not the idle Queen of any realm." Upon Kumar Bhojraj, son of Sanga, Rana of Mewar, fell the choice; then all too soon followed the bewildering, gorgeous marriage pageants, and the new life in her husband's home.

But never had those splendid halls held Rani like this. The rich dainties she put aside and with her own hands prepared simple meals, of which she partook after due sacrifice. No luxury of softly cushioned, silken couch tempted her, but upon a deer skin, stretched on the bare floor, she slept. No palace revel was honoured with her presence, but she gathered round her the sweet matrons and maids of that court, and tried to teach them meditation and worship. In her garden no fragrant golden champak, nor jasmine, nor queenly rose, poured out rich perfume; but only the sacred *tulsi* bush crowned each marble jar १

But the Prince's brow grew dark with displeasure, and he curtly told her that Rani did not thus. "Kumarji, 'twas all against me

will that I was forced to wed thee. To Shri Krishna my life I gave. To spend my days in His service did I vow; other duty have I none." And as she passed out from his presence her lovely voice floated back to him :

"What would'st thou that I do,

Lord of Mewar ?

But to adore my God is all I ask.

If it doth not please thee, Lord of Mewar,

Fling me aside,

In kingly pride.

Rejected by my God, Lord of Mewar,

Ah—then I die ! "

As the days passed and still Mirabai showed no inclination to deviate from the rigid course she had marked out for herself, hot anger burned in the Prince's heart.

Oft when Mirabai worshipped in the temple, she would fall into deep trance, and when she arose from it such exquisite melodies poured from her lips that the people stood entranced, and always greater grew the crowd around the temple, hoping to catch some of that undying song.

To the Mughal Emperor reached the fame of that song, and he desired to hear it. But



भयंकर

साधु

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how should he dare to visit the highborn Rajput Princess, and beg her sing for him?

"It would lay deadliest insult on the proud Rana, and make him a most relentless foe."

Tan-Sen, clever musician of the court, whispered a way—to go in secret, wearing

the humble yellow robes, and none would deny them entrance to the temple's sacred courts.

They went. Gloriously poured forth the ravishing floods of purest song, and all radiant her

exquisite face with the ecstasy of her love. Far, far, above all sordid dreams, all ruthless grasp

of Empire, was borne the thought of the royal listener upon that tide of deathless music.

At her feet he humbly bent, and offered her a jewelled necklace. In surprise she viewed

the handsome jewels; then said. "'Tis not for Sadhus to possess such treasures. Hast

thou obtained it fairly? Otherwise 'tis not fit offering."

"Deviji, the dark waters of swift Yamuna yielded it up as I bathed. 'Tis but

a poor bauble that I offer to thy God."

And Mirabai hung the glittering jewels upon the image of Shri Krishna. But

whispering tongues soon told the Prince of the splendid ornament that blazed there in

the temple. He demanded that it be brought to

him. One in the court had seen that self-same jewel sold to the Emperor; no threats could make him say otherwise. The Prince rested not till he learned how the Emperor had gone to the temple where his wife worshipped. Furious rage tore at his heart. "She is not fit for wife of mine, nor to be Mewar's for future Rani." And he gave orders that she be slain. None stirred to obey; greater than all fear of him as Prince was the fear of laying sacrilegious hand upon a devotee. He banished her to a small house near the palace with scant attendance—but she went on serenely.

The Prince brooded long to discover some way to be rid of her. At last he sent a box, exquisitely wrought and with message: "Bhakta indeed art thou, inflexible in thy chosen way. As offering is sent this jewel for thy throat." Surprised, Mirabai opened the box, when from it outsprang an angry snake and struck her furiously. "Kumarji," she calmly said: "I offer it to him I worship, as mala of chandan beads; and the horrid writhing thing she placed about her neck, and no harm was hers. Then sent the Prince a golden cup, superbly chased, brimming with deadliest poison."



"This is *amrita*, drink it" Quietly she took the cup, quaffed its contents, and said: "Poison is but the power of God, the ambrosial waters that have touched His feet. A thousand times I thank thee, Prince." Harmless as purest water proved the poison; and a few days she waited other commands. Curt, cruel message came: "'Tis not meet for thee to live: destroy thyself." "I obey," she simply said.

At night, when only the soft stars twinkled greeting, she passed out from the palace gates in humblest robes. Straight to swiftly flowing Yamuna she passed and offering herself sacrifice, she plunged into the cool waters. But there was other work for the devotee, and shining messenger was sent by Him she worshipped: "Mirabai, thy obedience complete, thy duties to thy husband are over. But there is other work for thee to do. Mankind waits to hear that which thou hast to teach of highest Love. Go thou and lift all men nearer God."

She rose from out the water and passed through the field and village, singing as she went, and men and women hastened to do her honour. Far across the land she wandered even unto Dvarka and ever there would come strange rumours to the Prince of one who

wandered singing, and he knew that it must be his wife and sent soldiers to slay her where'er she might be. When Mirabai saw the men approach, she <sup>असि</sup> guessed their intent, and, entering the temple, there prostrate <sup>प्रसन्न</sup> prayed: "O Lord, God of mercy, Protector of Thy humble devotees, Lord of all worlds, Thou who art the <sup>आन्तरिक</sup> Inner Self of all, Giver of life and death, of all joys and miseries, <sup>हर्ष-हानि</sup> Remover of all fear. Hail! Behold I am before Thee, suppliant. Protect Thou me. If it be Thy will, save me from mine enemies." The men approached to <sup>पकड़</sup> seize her, but they saw only a blazing, blinding, Light, and, as they fell prostrate in fear, a great voice thundered forth: "Go back, O <sup>अपराधी</sup> impious ones, who dare to try to destroy the devotee of the Lord." They <sup>पलटने</sup> hastily departed for Mewar, and men cried shame in their hearts upon the Prince, and many openly murmured against him. <sup>फैली-फिदी</sup>

Mirabai came at last to holy Vrindaban, and the whole populace <sup>सब</sup> <sup>सारा</sup> acclaimed her the Goddess of Kailasa, come again to walk the earth with man. There she abode, and her songs passed along on the lips of all. As the Prince went abroad, he heard praises of the wife he had cast away; he heard the



melodies that had been caught from her lip  
 he saw his people hastening from his realm  
 touch the feet of the woman he had sought  
 to destroy, whose kingdom was now greater  
 grown than his, for it was the kingdom of  
 men's hearts. His ministers besought him to  
 bring back the glory of Mewar, and his heart  
 smote him ever more and more, as deeper  
 and deeper grew his remorse for the things that  
 he had done. Would she return, she who lived  
 but for worship? Not as royal husband could  
 he go and command her. Ah no! she was  
 greater than mere earthly Rani. The yellow  
 robe he donned, and made his way with  
 difficulty to the temple whence flowed forth  
 the rich glory of song.

"Give alms," he begged.

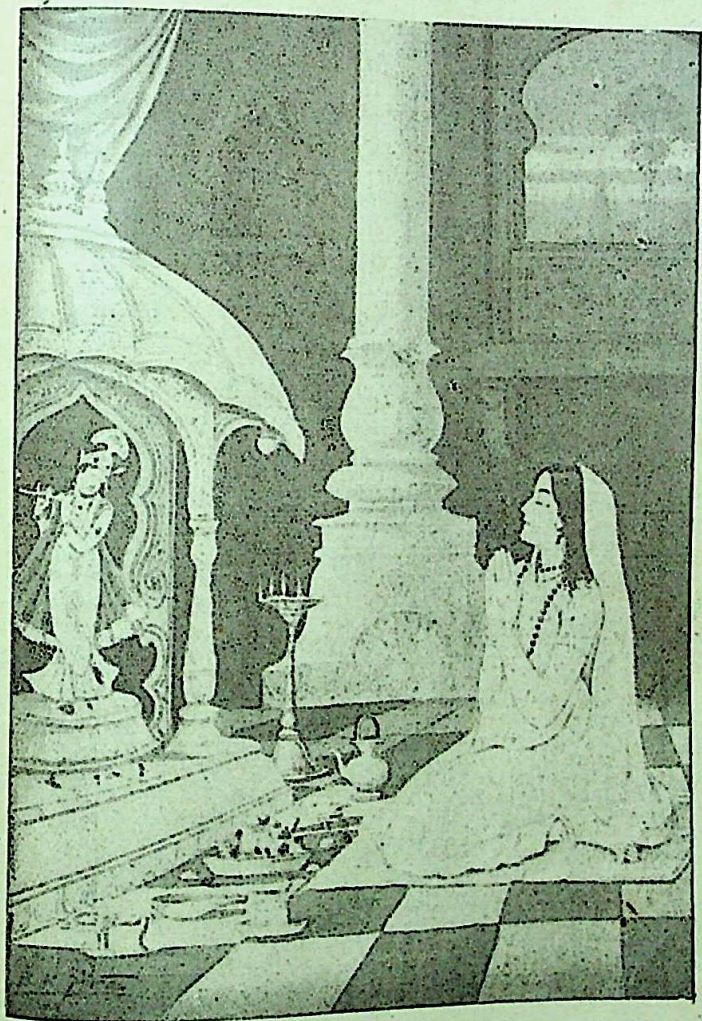
"A beggar woman has nought to give,  
 save blessing."

"Nay, 'tis thou alone canst help me."

"In what way may I serve thee?"

"By forgiving me," he cried, and removed  
 his disguise.

There was no room for bitterness in the  
 great heart of Mirabai, and very tenderly she  
 welcomed him. Back with him she returned  
 to Mewar, no longer the despised devotee, but



MIRA BAI





the crowning glory of Mewar. Many years she lived in sweet humility, untiring in her deeds of love and mercy, and in S. 1603 (A.D. 1547) she passed away, her husband dying before his father Sanga. And men reverence her name unto this day.

1. Murtis—a Hindi word for idols.
2. Maya—a Hindi word, meaning, worldly attachment.
3. Amrita—a Hindi word for nectar.
4. Ambrosial waters—*ambrosia* is the fabled food of the gods, which gave immortal youth and beauty to those who ate it. Ambrosial waters mean the heavenly waters which give immortality.

### COMPOSITION

- ✓ 1. Frame sentences to distinguish between :—  
Straight, strait ; clew, clue ; wed, wade ; wondered, wandered.
- ✓ 2. Illustrate the use of the following in your sentences :—To be rid of ; make one's way.
- ✓ 3. Explain :—Rich harvest gathered after many births of deep, true devotion ; humble and graciously tender ; gorgeous marriage pageants ; rich dainties ; deep trance ; exquisite melodies ; ravishing



floods of purest song ; ruthless grasp  
of Empire ; whispering tongues ;  
sacrilegious hand ; ambrosial waters.

4. Explain the following :—

(a) Gloriously poured..... music.

(b) But never..... marble jar

(c) Mataji ..... miseries of marriage

✓ 5. Why did not Mirabai marry ? What reasons did she give to her mother for not marrying ?

✓ 6. What did Mirabai's husband do to wean her away from her devotion ?

### GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :— Mirabai saw the men *approach*. The whole *populace* acclaimed her the Goddess of Kailasa, come again *to walk* the earth. She *who* lived *but* for worship. A beggar woman has *nought to give save* her blessings.

2. Analyse :— “As the Prince went abroad.....  
..... men's hearts.”

3. Change the narration of “Mataji .....  
..... miseries of marriage.”

## TO HIS MOTHER

*Oliver Goldsmith*

*Oliver Goldsmith* (1728—1774) was an Irish (by birth). At school he was known to be dunce ; at college, he just managed to get his degree. He tried to be a clergyman, a lawyer and a doctor in quick turns, but with no success anywhere. Finally, he took to literary work. He was always in financial difficulties on account of his extravagance and the habit of gambling. He was even once arrested by his land-lady for his debts. He was recklessly charitable when he had money. He is said to have died £2000 in debt. Nature had made him an exquisite writer, but a poor talker. His bosom friend, Dr. Samuel Johnson, said of him : "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand or more wise when he had." His Latin epitaph contains the following : He touched every kind of writing, and touched none that he did not adorn. His famous writings are : *The Traveller*, *The Deserted Village*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and *She Stoops to Conquer*.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddleback, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America, and, at the same time, paid the captain for my freight and all



the other expenses of my voyage. (But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks ; and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements.) My misfortune was, that, when the wind served, I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend, the captain, never inquired after me, but <sup>सुनाता</sup> set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing everything curious ; and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends) whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast Fiddleback, and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This, to be sure, was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above a hundred miles, but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight

miles from Cork. This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with peculiar emphasis. 'We shall,' says he, 'enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.'

However, upon the way, I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and, therefore, parted with a moiety of all my store: and pray, mother, ought I not to have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her? However, I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me, and would have torn me to pieces but for the assistance of a woman, whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog: yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe



opening stack and my brother had

fit of sickness, came down in his nightcap  
 nightgown, and slippers, and embraced me  
 with the most cordial welcome, showed me in  
 and after giving me a history of his indisposi-  
 tion, assured me that he considered himself  
 peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof  
 the man he most loved on earth, and whose  
 stay with him must, above all things, contri-  
 bute to his perfect recovery. (I now repented  
 sorely I had not given the poor woman the  
 other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of  
 humanity would be punctually answered by  
 this worthy man.) I revealed to him my  
 whole soul; I opened to him all my distresses;  
 and freely owned that I had but one half-  
 crown in my pocket; but that now, like a ship  
 after weathering out the storm, I considered  
 myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbour.  
 He made no answer, but walked about the  
 room, rubbing his hands as one in deep study.  
 This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of  
 a tender heart, which increased my esteem  
 for him, and as that increased, I gave the most  
 favourable interpretation to his silence. I  
 construed it into delicacy of sentiment, as if  
 he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing

his commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

It now approached six o'clock in the evening; and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and the heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologized that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house; observing, at the same time, that a milk diet was certainly the most healthful; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark. My hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

This lenten entertainment I had received: made me resolve to depart as soon as possible.



अनुसार

accordingly, next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. 'To be sure,' said he, 'the longer you stay away from your mother, the more you will grieve her and your other friends; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.' Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking 'how he thought I could travel above a hundred miles upon one half-crown?' I begged to borrow a single guinea, which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. 'And you know, sir,' said I, 'it is no more than I have often done for you.' To which he firmly answered, 'Why, look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there. I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you; sell your horse, and I will furnish you with a much better one to ride on.' I readily grasped at his proposal, and begged to see the nag; on which he led me to his bedchamber, and from under the bed he pulled

out a stout oak stick. 'Here he is,' said he; 'take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother's with more safety than such a horse as you ride.' I was in doubt, when I got it into my hand, whether I should not in the first place apply it to his pate; but a rap at the street-door made the wretch fly to it, and when I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counsellor-at-law in the neighbourhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

After spending an hour, he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my hospitable friend; but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives; one, that I was prejudiced in favour of the looks and manner of the counsellor; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there, indeed, I found everything



that I could wish, <sup>आनंद</sup>abundance without pro-  
 fusion, and elegance without affectation. In  
 the evening, when my old friend, who had  
 eaten very plentifully at his neighbour's table,  
 but talked again of lying down with the lamb,  
 made a motion to me for retiring, our generous  
 host requested I should take a bed with him,  
 upon which I plainly told my old friend that  
 he might go home and take care of the horse  
 he had given me, but that I should never re-  
 enter his doors. He went away with a laugh,  
 leaving me to add this to the other little  
 things the counsellor already knew of his  
 plausible neighbour.

<sup>अनुरोध, प्रार्थना</sup> And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient  
 to reconcile me to all my follies; for here I  
 spent three whole days. The counsellor had  
 two sweet girls to his daughters, who played  
 enchantingly on the harpsichord; and yet it  
 was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first  
 time I heard them: for that being the first  
 time also that either of them had touched the  
 instrument since their mother's death, I saw  
 the tears in silence trickle down their father's  
 cheeks. I every day endeavoured to go away,  
 but every day was pressed and obliged to stay.  
 On my going, the counsellor offered me his

purse, with a horse and servant to convey me home ; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

Notes

1. **Cork**—a sea-port in Irish Free State.
2. **Fiddleback**—the name of the horse bought by Goldsmith.
3. **The wind did not answer**—the wind was not favourable for sailing.
4. **Elements**—the forces of nature, such as wind, tide, etc.
5. **Moiety**—half.
6. **Cerberus**—the name of the huge mastiff. This name was given to him because he was very ferocious. In classical mythology, Cerberus was the many-headed dog, keeping a watch over the infernal regions of hades.
7. **Bills of Humanity**—accounts of money spent in charity.
8. **Porringer**—a small basin from which soup is eaten.
9. **Mites**—very small insects often found in cheese.
10. **Slop**—a liquid food, such as broth, etc.
11. **Lenten entertainment**—insufficient and sparing food. Lenten means relating to lent, an annual fast of forty days observed by the Christians



12. Nag—a small riding horse.
13. Pate—head.
14. Plausible—seeming to be true and sincere, but not actually so.
15. Harpsichord—an old fashioned musical instrument with a keyboard like the modern piano.

## COMPOSITION:

- ✓ 1. Frame sentences to distinguish between :—  
sail, sale ; esteem, steam ; fair, fare ; tail, tale ; mien, mean.
2. Explain :—Cordial welcome ; lenten entertainment ; engaging aspect ; abundance without profusion and elegance without affectation ; melancholy pleasure.
3. Explain the following :—  
(a) This I imputed .....speak for itself.  
(b) I revealed to him.....deep study.
- ✓ 4. Illustrate the use of the following in sentences of your own :—bound for ; set sail ; on board ; make adieu to.
- ✓ 5. Describe the treatment accorded to Goldsmith by his friend.
- ✓ 6. Give a character-sketch of Goldsmith

## GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :—*This lentenment entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible. I spoke of going. The longer you stay away the more you will grieve. Notwithstanding all this.*
2. Analyse :—However I soon arrived.....her master.
3. Change the narration of the conversation between Goldsmith and his friend.

## SIR ISAAC NEWTON

*Nathaniel Hawthorne*

On Christmas Day in the year 1642, Isaac Newton was born at a small village in Lincolnshire. Little did his mother think, when she saw her new-born babe, that he would by and by be clever enough to explain many matters which had been a puzzle ever since the creation of the world.

Isaac's father having died, his mother married again, and Isaac was left to the care of his good old grandmother, who was very kind to him and sent him to school.

In his early years Isaac did not appear to be a very bright scholar, but was known to be very clever at making things. He had a set of little tools and saws of various sizes made by himself. With the aid of these Isaac contrived to make many curious articles. The neighbours looked with great admiration at the things Isaac made; and his old grandmother, I suppose, was never weary of talking about him.

"He'll make a capital workman one of these days," she would probably say. "No



fear but that Isaac will do well in the world, and be a rich man before he dies."

It is amusing to try to guess what were the expectations of his grandmother and the neighbours about Isaac's future life. Some of them perhaps fancied that he would make beautiful furniture, and that all the rich people would purchase it to adorn their drawing-rooms. Others, probably, thought that little Isaac would be an architect or a builder, and would build splendid houses for the nobility and gentry, and churches too, with the tallest steeples that had ever been seen in England.

Some of her friends, no doubt, advised Isaac's grandmother to apprentice him to a clock-maker: for, besides his skill in making things, the boy seemed to have a taste for mathematics, which would be very useful to him in that profession. In due time, Isaac would set up for himself and would make curious and wonderful clocks. Indeed, there was some ground for supposing that Isaac would turn clock-maker, since he had already made one of a kind which nobody had ever heard of before. It was set going, not by wheels and weights like other clocks, but by

the dropping of water. This was an object of great wonder to all the people round about ; and it must be confessed that there are few boys or men either, who could manage to tell the time by means of a bowl of water.

Besides the water-clock, Isaac made a sundial. Thus his grandmother was never at a loss to know the hour : for the water-clock would tell it in the shade, and the dial in the sunshine. The sun-dial is said to be still in existence, on the corner of the house where Isaac lived. If so, it must have marked the passage of every sunny hour that has elapsed since Isaac Newton was a boy. It marked all the famous moments of his life : it marked the hour of his death ; and still the sunshine creeps slowly over it, as regularly as when Isaac first set it up. Yet we must not say that the sun-dial has lasted longer than its maker ; for Isaac Newton will exist long after the dial shall have crumbled to decay.

Isaac had a gift for finding out difficult things in simple ways. For instance, what method do you suppose he took to find out the strength of the wind ? You will never guess : yet nothing can be more simple. He jumped against the wind , and by the length of the



jump he could calculate the force of a gentle breeze, a gale or a tempest. Thus even in his boyish sports, he was searching out the secrets of Nature.

Not far from his grandmother's home there was a windmill which worked on a new plan. Isaac was in the habit of going there often, and would spend whole hours in examining its various parts. While the mill was at rest, he examined how it was made inside. When its broad sails were set in motion by the wind, he watched the process by which the mill-stones were made to go round and round, and crush the grain that was put into the hopper. Afterwards he was observed to be unusually busy with his tools.

It was not long before his grandmother and all the neighbourhood knew what Isaac had been about. He had made a model of the windmill: every part of the mill and its machinery was complete. Its little sails were neatly made of linen, and whirled about very swiftly when the mill was placed in a draught of air. Even a puff of wind from Isaac's mouth or from a pair of bellows was enough to set the sails in motion. And, what was most curious, if a handful of grains of wheat were



SIR ISAAC NEWTON





put into the little hopper, they would soon be turned into snow-white flour.

Isaac's friends were delighted with his new windmill. They thought that nothing so pretty and wonderful had ever been seen in the whole world.

"But, Isaac," said one of them, "you have forgotten one thing that belongs to a mill."

"What is that?" asked Isaac; for he supposed that, from top to bottom of the mill, he had forgotten nothing.

"Why, where is the miller?" said his friend.

"That is true; I must look out for one," said Isaac; and he set himself to think how the want should be supplied.

He might easily have made the tiny figure of a man; but then it would not have been able to move about and perform the duties of a miller. It so happened, however, that a mouse had just been caught in the trap; and as no other miller could be found, Mr. Mouse was given the post. And a very respectable miller he made in his dark grey coat; although, to be sure, he had not a very good name for honesty, for it was thought he



sometimes stole part of the grain which was given him to grind.

As Isaac grew older, it was found that he had far more important matters in his mind than the making of toys like the little windmill. All day long, if left to himself, he was either deep in serious thought, or busy with some learned book.

At night, I think it likely, he looked up with curiosity to the stars, and wondered whether they were worlds like our own, and how great was their distance from the earth, and what was the power that kept them in their courses. Perhaps, even in early life, Isaac Newton had a feeling that he should be able hereafter to answer these questions.

When Isaac was fourteen years old, his mother's second husband being now dead, she wished her son to leave school, and help her to manage the farm. For a year or two, therefore, he tried to fix his thoughts on farming. But his mind was so bent upon becoming a scholar that his mother sent him back to school, and afterwards to the University of Cambridge.

I have now finished telling you about Isaac Newton's boyhood. My story would be far too long were I to mention all the splendid discoveries he made after he came to be a man. He was the first who found out the nature of light; for, before his day, nobody could tell what the sunshine was composed of.

You remember, I suppose, the story about the apple falling on his head, and thus leading him to find out the force which keeps the heavenly bodies in their places. When he once got hold of this idea, he never allowed his mind to rest until he had searched out all the laws by which the planets are guided through the sky. / This he did as well as if he had gone up among the stars and tracked them in their paths. The boy had found out how a windmill was made; the man explained to his fellow-men the machinery of the universe.

Did you ever hear the story of Newton and his little dog Diamond? One day, when he was fifty years old, and had been hard at work more than twenty years studying a very difficult subject, he went out of his room, leaving his little dog asleep before the fire. On the table lay a heap of written papers. Containing all the facts which Newton had



found out during those twenty years. When his master was gone, up rose little Diamond, jumped upon the table and overthrew the lighted candle. The papers at once caught fire.

Just as they were all burned Newton opened the door, and saw that the labours of twenty years were reduced to a heap of ashes. There stood little Diamond, who had done all the mischief. Almost any other man would have had the dog put to death. But Newton patted him on the head as kindly as usual, although grief was at his heart.

"O Diamond, Diamond," cried he, "you little know the mischief you have done!"

This misfortune affected his health and spirits for some time afterwards; but from his conduct towards the little dog, you may judge what was the sweetness of his temper.

Newton lived to be a very old man, and gained great fame. He was made a member of Parliament, and received the honour of knighthood from the king. But he cared little for earthly fame and honours, and felt no pride in the vastness of his knowledge. All that he had learned only made him feel how little he knew where there is so much to be known.

At last, in 1727, when he was eighty-five years old, Sir Isaac Newton died—or rather, he ceased to live on earth. He has left a fame behind him which will be as lasting as if his name were written in letters of light formed by the stars upon the midnight sky.

### Notes

1. **Capital workman**—excellent workman.
2. **Drawing-room**—a reception room.
3. **Sun-dial**—an instrument for measuring time by means of the motion of the sun's shadow cast by a style erected on its surface.
4. **Hopper**—a square-sided funnel through which the grain passes into a mill.

### COMPOSITION

- ✓1. Frame sentences to distinguish between :—  
born, borne; plan, plain; draught, drought, draft.  
bellows, billows, blows; farm, form.
- ✓2. Illustrate the use of the following in your sentences :—  
By and by; set up; to be at a loss; set in motion  
get hold of.
- ✓3. Explain :—Capital workman, sun-dial.
- ✓4. Explain the following :—(a) It marked.....to decay.  
(b) At last in 1727.....sky
- ✓5. Tell the story of Sir Isaac Newton.
- ✓6. Describe the character of Sir Isaac Newton.





## THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Charles Lamb

*Charles Lamb* (1775—1834) was educated at Christ's Hospital School in London. In 1795, he became a clerk in India House. He led a life of selfless bachelor, devoting all his care and concern over his elder sister, *Mary Lamb* (1764—1847), who was a victim of occasional insanity. Charles Lamb himself was threatened with madness sometimes. They loved to read Shakespeare's plays. They both read and enjoyed them together. This common enjoyment led to the production of *Tales from Shakespeare* in 1907. The *Merchant of Venice* was written by Mary. Charles Lamb's name is the foremost in the history of the revival of the essay during the first quarter of the 19th century. He is the author of the immortal essays of *Elia*.

SHYLOCK, the Jew, lived at Venice; he was a usurer, who had amassed an immense fortune by lending money at great interest to Christian merchants, and exacting the payment of the money he lent with such severity that he was much disliked by all good men, and particularly by Antonio, a young merchant of Venice; and Shylock as much hated Antonio, because he used to lend money to people in distress, and would never take any interest for the money he lent; therefore, there was great



enmity between this covetous Jew and the generous merchant Antonio.

Antonio was the kindest man that lived. He was greatly beloved by all his fellow-citizens; but the friend who was nearest and dearest to his heart was Bassanio, a noble Venetian, who, having but a small patrimony, had nearly exhausted his little fortune by living in too expensive a manner for his slender means, as young men of high rank with small fortunes are too apt to do. Whenever Bassanio wanted money, Antonio assisted him; and it seemed as if they had but one heart and one purse between them.

One day Bassanio came to Antonio, and told him that he wished to repair his fortune by a wealthy marriage with a lady whom he dearly loved, whose father, that was lately dead, had left her sole heiress to a large estate; and that in her father's lifetime he used to visit at her house, when he thought he had observed this lady had sometimes from her eyes sent speechless messages, that seemed to say he would be no unwelcome suitor. But not having money to furnish himself with an appearance befitting the lover of so rich an heiress, he besought Antonio to add to the

many favours he had shown him, by lending him three thousand ducats. *तिस्रों हजार*

Antonio had no money by him at that time to lend his friend ; but *उम्मीद* expecting soon to have some ships come home laden with merchandise. he said he would go to Shylock, the rich money-lender, and borrow the money upon the *पैसे* credit of those ships.

Antonio and Bassanio went together to Shylock, and Antonio asked the Jew to lend him three thousand ducats upon any interest he should require. to be *उत्प्रेषित* paid out of the merchandise *उत्प्रेषित* contained in his ships at sea. On this Shylock thought within himself, ' If I can once catch him on the *पकड़* hip, I will feed fat the ancient *विरुद्ध* grudge I bear him ; he *द्वेष* hates our Jewish nation ; he lends out money gratis, and *मुफ्त* among the merchants he *गुरा मल बहना* rails at me and my well-earned bargains, which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe if I forgive him ! ' Antonio finding he was *चिन्तित* musing within himself and did not answer, and being *असहिष्णु* impatient for the money, said, ' Shylock, do you hear ? will you lend the money ? ' To this question the Jew replied, ' Signior Anontio, on the *रिआल्टो* Rialto many a time and often you have railed at me about my moneys and my usuries, and I have borne it with



a patient shrug, for sufferance is the badge of all our tribe; and then you have called me unbeliever, cut-throat dog, and spit upon my Jewish garments, and spurned at me with your foot as if I was a cur. Well then, it now appears you need my help; and you come to me and say, *Shylock, lend me moneys*. Has a dog money? Is it possible a cur should lend three thousand ducats?' Antonio replied, 'I am as like to call you so again, to spit on you again, and spurn you too. If you will lend me this money, lend it not to me as to a friend, but rather lend it to me as to an enemy, that, if I break, you may with better face exact the penalty.'— 'Why, look you,' said Shylock, 'how you storm! I would be friends with you, and have your love. I will forget the shames you have put upon me. I will supply your wants, and take no interest for my money.' This seemingly kind offer greatly surprised Antonio: and then Shylock, still pretending kindness and that all he did was to gain Antonio's love, again said he would lend him the three thousand ducats, and take no interest for his money; only Antonio should go with him to a lawyer, and there sign in merry sport a bond, that if he did not repay the money by a certain

day; he would forfeit a pound of flesh, to be cut off from any part of his body that Shylock pleased.

‘Content,’ said Antonio; ‘I will sign to this bond, and say there is much kindness in the Jew.’

Bassanio said Antonio should not sign to such a bond for him; but still Antonio insisted that he would sign it; for that before the day of payment came, his ships would return laden with many times the value of the money.

Shylock, hearing this debate, exclaimed, ‘O father Abraham, what suspicious people these Christians are! Their own hard dealings teach them to suspect the thoughts of others. I pray you tell me this, Bassanio: if he should break his day, what should I gain by the exaction of the forfeiture? I say, to buy his favour I offer this friendship: if he will take it, so; if not, adieu.’

At last, against the advice of Bassanio, who, notwithstanding all the Jew had said of his kind intentions, did not like his friend should run the hazard of the shocking penalty for his sake, Antonio signed the bond, think-



ing it really was (as the Jew said) merely in sport.

The rich heiress that Bassanio wished to marry lived near Venice, at a place called Belmont; her name was Portia, and in the graces of her person and her mind she was nothing inferior to that Portia of whom we read, who was Cato's daughter and the wife of Brutus.

Bassanio, being so kindly supplied with money by his friend Antonio at the hazard of his life, set out for Belmont with a splendid train, and attended by a gentleman of the name of Gratiano.

Bassanio proving successful in his suit, Portia in a short time consented to accept of him for a husband.

Bassanio was so overpowered with gratitude and wonder at the gracious manner in which the rich and noble Portia accepted of a man of his humble fortunes, that he could not express his joy and reverence to the dear lady who so honoured him by anything but broken words of love and thankfulness; and taking the ring, he vowed never to part with it.

Gratiano, and Nerissa, Portia's waiting-maid, were in attendance upon their lord and

lady, when Portia so gracefully promised to become the obedient wife of Bassanio : and Gratiano, wishing Bassanio and the generous lady joy, desired permission to be married at the same time.

‘ With all my heart, Gratiano,’ said Bassanio, ‘ if you can get a wife.’

Gratiano then said that he loved the lady Portia’s fair waiting gentlewoman Nerissa, and that she had promised to be his wife, if her lady married Bassanio. Portia asked Nerissa if this was true. Nerissa replied, ‘ Madam, it is so, if you approve of it.’ Portia willingly consenting Bassanio pleasantly said, ‘ Then our wedding feast shall be much honoured by your marriage, Gratiano.’

The happiness of these lovers was sadly crossed at this moment by the entrance of a messenger, who brought letter from Antonio containing fearful tidings. When Bassanio read Antonio’s letter, Portia feared it was to tell him of the death of some dear friend, he looked so pale ; and inquiring what was the news which had so distressed him, he said ; ‘ O sweet Portia, here are a few of the unpleasantest words that ever blotted paper : gentle lady, when I first imparted my love to you I



freely told you all the wealth I had ran in my veins ; but I should have told you that I had less than nothing, being in debt.' Bassanio then told Portia what has been here related, of his borrowing the money of Antonio, and of Antonio's procuring it of Shylock, the Jew, and of the bond by which Antonio had engaged to forfeit a pound of flesh if it was not repaid by a certain day ; and then Bassanio read Antonio's letter ; the words of which were, *Sweet, Bassanio, my ships are all lost, my bond to the Jew is forfeited, and since in paying it is impossible I should live, I could wish to see you at my death ; notwithstanding, use your pleasure ; if your love for me do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.* 'O my dear love,' said Portia, ' dispatch all business, and begone ; you shall have gold to pay the money twenty times over, before this kind friend shall lose a hair by my Bassanio's fault ; and as you are so dearly bought, I will dearly love you. Portia then said she would be married to Bassanio before he set out, to give him a legal right to her money ; and that same day they were married, and Gratiano was also married to Nerissa, and Bassanio and Gratiano, the instant they were married.

set out in great haste for Venice, where Bassanio found Antonio in prison.

The day of payment being past the cruel Jew would not accept of the money which Bassanio offered him, but insisted upon having a pound of Antonio's flesh. A day was appointed to try this shocking case before the duke of Venice and Bassanio awaited in dreadful suspense the event of the trial.

When Portia parted with her husband she spoke cheerfully to him, and bade him bring his dear friend along with him when he returned; yet she feared it would go hard with Antonio, and when she was left alone, she began to think and consider within herself, if she could by any means be instrumental in saving the life of her dear Bassanio's friend; and notwithstanding when she wished to honour her Bassanio, she had said to him with such a meek and wife-like grace, that she would submit in all things to be governed by his superior wisdom, yet being now called forth into action by the peril of her honoured husband's friend, she did nothing doubt her own powers, and by the sole guidance of her own true and perfect judgment, at once resolved to go herself to Venice, and speak in Antonio's defence.



Portia had a relation who was a counsellor in the law; to this gentleman, whose name was Bellario, she wrote, and stating the case to him desired his opinion, and that with his advice he would also send her dress worn by a counsellor. When the messenger returned, he brought letters from Bellario of advice how to proceed, and also everything necessary for her equipment.

Portia dressed herself and her maid Nerissa in men's apparel, and putting on the robes of a counsellor, she took Nerissa along with her as her clerk; and setting out immediately, they arrived at Venice on the very day of the trial. The case was just going to be heard before the duke and senators of Venice in the senate-house, when Portia entered this high court of justice, and presented a letter from Bellario, in which that learned counsellor wrote to the duke, saying, he would have come himself to plead for Antonio, but that he was prevented by sickness, and he requested that the learned young doctor Balthasar (so he called Portia) might be permitted to plead in his stead. This the duke granted, much wondering at the youthful appearance of the stranger, who

was prettily disguised by her counsellor's robes and her large wig.

And now began this important trial. Portia looked around her, and she saw the merciless Jew; and she saw Bassanio, but he knew her not in her disguise. He was standing beside Antonio, in an agony of distress and fear for his friend.

The importance of the arduous task Portia had engaged in gave this tender lady courage, and she boldly proceeded in the duty she had undertaken to perform; and first of all she addressed herself to Shylock; and allowing that he had a right by the Venetian law to have the forfeit expressed in the bond, she spoke so sweetly of the noble quality of *mercy*, as would have softened any heart but the unfeeling Shylock's; saying, that it dropped as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath; and how mercy was a double blessing, it blessed him that gave, and him that received it; and how it became monarchs better than their crowns, being an attribute of God Himself; and that earthly power came nearest to God's, in proportion as mercy tempered justice; and she bid Shylock remember that as we all pray for mercy, that same prayer should teach us to



show mercy. Shylock only answered her by desiring to have the penalty forfeited in the bond. 'Is he not able to pay the money?' asked Portia. Bassanio then offered the Jew the payment of the three thousand ducats as many times over as he should desire; which Shylock refusing, and still insisting upon having a pound of Antonio's flesh, Bassanio begged the learned young counsellor would endeavour to wrest the law a little to save Antonio's life. But Portia gravely answered; that laws once established must never be altered. Shylock hearing Portia say that the law might not be altered, it seemed to him that she was pleading in his favour, and he said. 'A Daniel is come to judgment! O wise young judge, how I do honour you! How much elder are you than your looks!'

Portia now desired Shylock to let her look at the bond; and when she had read it, she said, 'This bond is forfeited, and by this the Jew may lawfully claim a pound of flesh, to be by him cut off nearest Antonio's heart.' Then she said to Shylock, 'Be merciful; take the money, and bid me tear the bond.' But no mercy would the cruel Shylock show; and he said, 'By my soul I swear, there is no power in the tongue of man to alter me.'—'Why then,

Antonio,' said Portia, ' you must prepare your bosom for the knife, and while Shylock was sharpening a long knife with great eagerness to cut off the pound of flesh, Portia said to Antonio, 'Have you anything to say?' Antonio with a calm resignation replied, that he had but little to say, for that he had prepared his mind for death. Then he said to Bassanio, ' Give me your hand, Bassanio! Fare you well! Grieve not that I am fallen into this misfortune for you. Commend me to your honourable wife, and tell her how I have loved you!' Bassanio in the deepest affliction replied, 'Antonio, I am married to a wife, who is as dear to me as life itself, but life itself, my wife, and all the world, are not esteemed with me above your life: I would lose all, I would sacrifice all to this devil here, to deliver you.'

Shylock now cried out impatiently, 'We trifle time; I pray pronounce the sentence.' And now all was awful expectation in the court, and every heart was full of grief for Antonio.

Portia asked if the scales were ready to weigh the flesh; and she said to the Jew, 'Shylock, you must have some surgeon by, lest he bleed to death.' Shylock, whose whole



intent was that Antonio should bleed to death, said, 'It is not so named in the bond.' Portia replied, 'It is not so named in the bond, but what of that? It were good you did so much for charity.' To this all the answer Shylock would make was, 'I cannot find it; it is not in the bond.' 'Then,' said Portia, 'a pound of Antonio's flesh is thine. The law allows it, and the court awards it. And you may cut this flesh from off his breast. The law allows it, and the court awards it.' Again Shylock exclaimed, 'O wise and upright judge! A Daniel is come to judgment!' And then he sharpened his long knife again, and looking eagerly on Antonio he said, 'Come, prepare!'

'Tarry a little, Jew,' said Portia, 'there is something else. This bond here gives you no drop of blood; the words expressly are, "a pound of flesh." If in the cutting of the pound of flesh you shed one drop of Christian blood, your lands and goods are by the law to be confiscated to the state of Venice.' Now as it was utterly impossible for Shylock to cut off the pound of flesh without shedding some of Antonio's blood, this wise discovery of Portia's that it was flesh and not blood that was named in the bond, saved the life of Antonio; and all admiring the wonderful sagacity of the young

counsellor, who had so happily thought of this expedient, plaudits resounded from every part of the senate-house ; and Gratiano exclaimed in the words which Shylock had used, ' O wise and upright judge ! mark, Jew, a Daniel is come to judgment ! '

Shylock, finding himself defeated in his cruel intent, said with a disappointed look. that he would take the money ; and Bassanio, rejoiced beyond measure at Antonio's unexpected deliverance, cried out, ' Here is the money ! ' But Portia stopped him, saying softly : ' There is no haste ; the Jew shall have nothing but the penalty : therefore, prepare, Shylock to cut off the flesh ; but mind you shed no blood : nor do not cut off more nor less than just a pound ; if the scale turn but by the weight of a single hair, you are condemned by the laws of Venice to die, and all your wealth is forfeited to the senate.' ' Give me my money, and let me go,' said Shylock. ' I have it ready,' said Bassanio, ' here it is.'

Shylock was going to take the money, when Portia again stopped him, saying, ' Tarry, Jew ; I have yet another hold upon you. By the laws of Venice your wealth is forfeited to the state, for having conspired against the life of



one of its citizens, and your life lies at the mercy of the duke; therefore down on your knees, and ask him to pardon you.'

The duke then said to Shylock. 'That you may see the difference of our Christian spirit, I pardon you, your life before you ask it; half of your wealth belongs to Antonio, the other half comes to the state.'

The generous Antonio then said that he would give up his share of Shylock's wealth, if Shylock would sign a deed to make it over at his death to his daughter and her husband; for Antonio knew that the Jew had an only daughter who had lately married against his consent to a young Christian, named Lorenzo, a friend of Antonio's, which had so offended Shylock that he had disinherited her.

The Jew agreed to this: and being thus disappointed in his revenge, and despoiled of his riches, he said, 'I am ill. Let me go home; send the deed after me, and I will sign over half my riches to my daughter.'—'Get thee gone, then,' said the duke, 'and sign it; and if you repent your cruelty and turn Christian, the state will forgive you the fine of the other half of your riches.'

The duke now released Antonio, and dismissed the court. He then highly praised the wisdom and ingenuity of the young counsellor, and invited him home to dinner. Portia who meant to return to Belmont before her husband, replied, 'I humbly thank your grace, but I must away directly.' The duke said he was sorry he had not leisure to stay and dine with him; and turning to Antonio, he added, 'Reward this gentleman; for in my mind you are much indebted to him.'

The duke and his senators left the court, and then Bassanio said to Portia, 'Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend Antonio have by your wisdom been this day acquitted of grievous penalties, and I beg you will accept of the three thousand ducats due unto the Jew.' 'And we shall stand indebted to you over and above,' said Antonio, 'in love and service evermore.'

Portia could not be prevailed upon to accept the money; but upon Bassanio still pressing her to accept of some reward, she said, 'Give me your gloves; I will wear them for your sake'; and then Bassanio taking off his gloves she espied the ring which she had given him upon his finger: now it was the ring the wily



lady wanted to get from him to make a merry jest, when she saw her Bassanio again, that made her ask him for his gloves; and she said when she saw the ring, 'and for your love I will take this ring from you.' Bassanio was sadly distressed that the counsellor should ask him for the only thing he could not part with, and he replied in great confusion that he could not give him that ring, because it was his wife's gift and he had vowed never to part with it; but that he would give him the most valuable ring in Venice, and find it out by proclamation. On this Portia affected to be affronted left the court, saying, 'You teach me, sir, how a beggar should be answered.'

"Dear Bassanio," said Antonio, 'let him have the ring; let my love and the great service he has done for me be valued against your wife's displeasure.' Bassanio, ashamed to appear so ungrateful, <sup>yielded</sup>, and sent Gratiano after Portia with the ring; and then the clerk Nerissa, who had also given Gratiano a ring, begged ~~his ring~~ <sup>his ring</sup>, and Gratiano (not choosing to be outdone in generosity by his lord) gave it to her. And there was laughing among these ladies to think, when they got home, how they would tax their husbands.

with giving away their rings, and swear that they had given them as a present to some woman.

Portia, when she returned, was in that happy temper of mind which never fails to attend the <sup>act</sup>consciousness of having performed a good action; her cheerful spirits enjoyed everything she saw: the moon never seemed to shine so bright before; and when that pleasant moon was hid behind a cloud, then a light which she saw from her house at Belmont as well pleased her charmed fancy, and she said to Nerissa, 'That light we see is burning in my hall; how far that little candle throws its beams, so shines a good deed in a naughty world'; and hearing the sound of music from her house, she said, 'Methinks that music sounds much sweeter than by day.'

And now Portia and Nerissa entered the house, and dressing themselves in their own apparel, they awaited the arrival of their husbands, who soon followed them with Antonio; and Bassanio presenting his dear friend to the lady Portia, the congratulations and welcomings of that lady were hardly over, when they perceived Nerissa and her husband quarrelling in a corner of the room. 'A quarrel already?'



said Portia, 'What is the matter?' Gratiano replied, 'Lady, it is about a paltry gilt ring that Nerissa gave me, with words upon it like the poetry on a cutler's knife: *love me, and leave me not.*'

'What does the poetry or the value of the ring signify?' said Nerissa. 'You swore to me when I gave it to you, that you would keep it until the hour of death; and now you say you gave it to the lawyer's clerk. I know you gave it to a woman.'—'By this hand,' replied Gratiano, 'I gave it to a youth, a kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy, no higher than yourself; he was a clerk to the young counsellor that by his wise pleading saved Antonio's life: this prating boy begged it for a fee, and I could not for my life deny him.' Portia said, 'You were to blame, Gratiano, to part with your wife's first gift. I gave my lord Bassanio a ring, and I am sure he would not part with it for all the world.' Gratiano, in excuse for his fault, now said, 'My lord Bassanio gave his ring away to the counsellor, and then the boy, his clerk, that took some pains in writing, he begged my ring.'

Portia hearing this seemed very angry, and reproached Bassanio for giving away her

ring; and she said Nerissa had taught her what to believe, and that she knew some woman had the ring. Bassanio was very unhappy to have so offended his dear lady, and he said with great earnestness, 'No, by my honour, no woman had it, but a civil doctor, who refused three thousand ducats of me and begged the ring, which when I denied him, he went displeased away. What could I do, sweet Portia? I was so beset with shame for my seeming ingratitude, that I was forced to send the ring after him. Pardon me, good lady; had you been there I think you would have begged the ring of me to give the worthy doctor.'

'Ah!' said Antonio, 'I am the unhappy cause of these quarrels.'

Portia bid Antonio not to grieve at that he was welcome notwithstanding; and then Antonio said, 'I once did lend my body for Bassanio's sake; and but for him to whom your husband gave the ring I should have now been dead. I dare be bound again, my soul upon the forfeit, your lord will never more break his faith with you.'—'Then you shall be his surety,' said Portia; 'give him this ring, and bid him keep it better than the other.'



When Bassanio looked at this ring, he was strangely surprised to find it was the same he gave away; and then Portia told him how she was the young counsellor, and Nerissa was her clerk; and Bassanio found, to his unspeakable wonder and delight, that it was by the noble courage and wisdom of his wife that Antonio's life was saved.

And Portia again welcomed Antonio, and gave him letters which by some chance had fallen into her hands, which contained an account of Antonio's ships, that were supposed lost, being safely arrived in the harbour. So these tragical beginnings of this rich merchant's story were all forgotten in the unexpected good fortune which ensued; and there was leisure to laugh at the comical adventure of the rings, and the husbands that did not know their own wives: Gratiano merrily swearing, in a sort of rhyming speech, that

—while he lived, he'd fear no other thing  
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

## Notes

1. **Ducats**—a gold coin formerly current in Italy, equal to nine shillings each.
2. **Catch one on the hip**—get advantage over some one. The metaphor is taken from wrestling.
3. **Signior**—(Pro. Sen' yor) an epithet added before an Italian gentleman's name.
4. **Rialto**—the name of a famous bridge over the Grand Canal in Venice. It was always crowded with merchants, being an important business centre.
5. **Abraham**—the father of the Hebrew people.
6. **Cato's daughter**—Portia, Cato was a very distinguished general and citizen of Rome, born in 95 B.C.
7. **Brutus**—Marcus Brutus (85—42 B. C.) a highly respected and learned citizen of Rome.
8. **Suit**—seeking of woman's hand in marriage.
9. **Senators**—State councillors. The Senate was the State Council in ancient Rome.
10. **Daniel**—was one of the Jews carried to Babylon where he gained a high position in the court by his uprightness and integrity.
11. **Plaudits**—cheers and clapping of hands.
12. **Cutler**—a dealer in knives.
13. **Scrubbed**—dwarfed, not fully grown.
14. **Civil doctor**—a doctor of civil laws.



## COMPOSITION

1. Frame sentences to distinguish between :—

Soul, sole ; heir, air ; sake, shake ; pail, pale ; vein,  
wane, vain ; rain, rein, reign ; councillor, counsellor ;  
weigh, way ; shed, shade ; naughty, knotty ; refuse,  
deny.

2. Illustrate the use of the following in your sentences :—

Catch on the hip ; feed fat one's grudge ; rail at ;  
run the hazard ; set out ; part with ; make over ;  
prevail upon.

3. Explain :—Dreadful suspense ; awful expectation ;  
arduous task ; calm resignation.

4. Explain the following :—

(a) Saying, that it dropped as the gentle rain.....  
.....pray for mercy.

(b) Antonio was the kindest man.....in Italy.

5. Describe the trial scene.

6. Give a character sketch of (i) Portia, (ii) Shylock,  
(iii) Antonio, (iv) Bassanio.

## GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :—He bade him *bring* the ring.  
Let him *have* the ring.

2. Analyse (i) "Shylock.....Antonio "  
(ii) "Bassanio was so overpowered.....  
.....with it."

(iii) When Bassanio looked at the ring ----  
.....life was saved."

3. Change the narration of the speech on mercy delivered by Portia.

## THE CZARINA'S VIOLET

✓ Quiller-Couch

*Sir Arthur Quiller Couch* was a Professor of English literature at the Cambridge University. He distinguished himself by writing short stories, essays, criticisms and anthologies of poems. *Oxford Book of English Verse* is one of his very popular books.

Once upon a time the German Emperor wished to be at peace with the Czar of Russia. He was at peace already—but he wished to be more so; because he was old, and old men desire to see peace all around them. (It makes the settling up of their worldly affairs so much easier; and when they die people say: “There went one who saw the folly of quarrelling!”)

But unfortunately he was so infirm with age that he could not risk the journey to St. Petersburg. So in his place, with a letter of apology, he sent his Chancellor — who was no other than the famous Prince Bismarck.

Prince Bismarck arrived at St. Petersburg late at night. When he reached the palace, the Czar had gone to bed. But the Lord Chamberlain was up, and gave him supper, after which he was shown to a magnificent bedroom with a bright fire burning — for Russia is a cold country.



Next morning he awoke to find the sun shining; and being an early riser — to which habit he was wont to attribute much of his success in life — he lost no time in putting on his clothes, to take a walk in the park.

But early as Prince Bismarck was, the Czar's Guards were earlier. At every corner of the great palace, at the point where every two alleys divided, and at intervals along every well-kept avenue, he found a tall soldier planted. As he passed, each soldier saluted raising his rifle to the "present" in five distinct and accurate motions. (And this annoyed Prince Bismarck, because the birds were singing all the time, and the dew sparkling on the grass and moreover, he wanted to be alone to collect his thoughts for the Czar would certainly send for him after breakfast, and there were some nice points to be discussed before the Treaty could be agreed on.)

"These Guards are a nuisance", said Prince Bismarck to himself. "Moreover their uniform clashes in colour with the petunias. There is more wealth than taste in this country."

(He walked on and on, until at length it really seemed that he was free of their attentions. For he came to an avenue of pine trees

along which no sentries were visible; and at the end it opened upon a level stretch of turf, the like of which he had never seen for smoothness or beauty.)

"This is better," he began. But "Oh, confound it." He went on, as his eyes fell on yet another soldier who stood stiffly, almost (but not quite) in the centre of the grass plot.

He was moving on impatiently, when it struck him as curious that a soldier should be posted just there. (He wanted to be alone, to compose his opening remarks to the Czar; yet in all his life he had never been able to pass by anything he did not understand—which was another secret of his success.) So he went up to the soldier, who presented arms in five distinct motions accurate as clockwork.

"Excuse me, my man," said Prince Bismarck; "but what are you doing here?"

"How should I know," said the soldier, who happened to be a Finn, and had not yet learnt Court address.

"But this is curious," said Bismarck, looking about him. "If you were standing guard by the walk, now or even in the centre of this piece of turf—though I don't see what purpose that would serve—"



"I stand where I am told to stand," answered the soldier, somewhat angry at being criticised by a stranger.

"And who told you to stand here?"

"Why the sergeant, to be sure."

This was all Prince Bismarck could learn. He walked on. But, as he returned to the palace, there was the soldier still posted, as patient as ever, and guarding nothing at all.

After breakfast he was sent for and held a long conversation with the Czar, who, towards the end of it began to wonder how a man so absent-minded had contrived to make himself a European reputation of the first class.

"I am afraid" said the Czar at length, very politely, "I have the misfortune not to make my point clear, if it be a question of how I station my soldiers in Poland."

"In the middle of grass-plots!" interrupted Prince Bismarck.

The Czar started.

"I—I humbly beg your Imperial Majesty's pardon!" cried Prince Bismarck, recollecting himself and sitting up with a jerk. "The fact is, I saw something this morning which so

puzzled me that it has been weighing on my mind ever since."

"Indeed?" said the Czar. "May one ask what this was? for we desire to study our guest's comfort in everything."

Bismarck told him.

The Czar frowned for he was considering "Beyond the pine avenue, you say? That must be the old archery ground. ... Why, yes! Now I come to think of it, there is a guardsman just in that place. I must have passed him hundreds of time; but it never occurred to me to wonder what he was doing there. Let us go and ask him!" suggested the Czar brightly. "We can let the Treaty wait until this afternoon."

They walked out to the archery-ground together. The guard had been relieved, but there stood a soldier, though a different one, on precisely the same spot; and he saluted precisely as all the others had saluted.

"Why are you standing here?" demanded the Czar.

The soldier trembled a good deal, but confessed that he did not know. The sergeant was sent for, but he knew as little as the soldier. He went in turn to summon his captain, who



could only say that every sentinel was posted under the Colonel's directions. This meant sending for the Colonel of the Guard.

The Colonel explained that in disposing the sentinels he rigidly followed a plan drawn up by his predecessor (an eminent Field Officer, since deceased), and approved by the War Ministry of that day, after consultation with the Ministry of the Interior. *note*

"Do you tell me that you have never shifted a single one, in all this time?" asked the Czar.

"May it please you, sire, not one in all these twelve years," answered the Colonel of the Guard with evident pride. He mentioned the length of his service, laying a little stress upon it because the promotion lists had overlooked his name, and he had almost begun to think his merits forgotten. "Not a single man, sire, by so much as a foot," said the Colonel of the Guard.)

30/9/52. "We will look into this after luncheon," said the Czar somewhat hastily—for he did not wish Prince Bismarck to think his army at any point inefficient. "Meanwhile let a despatch be sent to the Minister for War. I wish to be informed why this man is standing on this grass plot."

A pretty to-do there was when this message reached the Ministry! The Minister for War himself sat for two hours in consultation with all the oldest Field Marshals he could summon at short notice: and as for the Secretaries and Clerks of the department, they tumbled over one another as they hunted through pigeonholes, dived into despatch boxes, dossiers, wastepaper baskets. The dust was terrific: it kept them sneezing all the while.

The senior Field Marshal of the Empire was bed-ridden, besides being very deaf. The Minister had to take a cab and call upon him.

"Yes, yes," said the Senior Field Marshal, misunderstanding. "The Emperor wants to know exactly how I managed to beat the Turks, fifty-five years ago. Well, that is satisfactory, because none of the histories describe it accurately."

As a matter of fact, it was not at all certain that he had beaten the Turks. The Turkish histories in particular were quite positive that, on the contrary, he had been beaten. But he began to tell the Minister just how it happened, from the very start, tracing out.



position of the two armies on the pattern of the bed-quilt.

"But," protested the Minister, waving his hands, then taking rapidly on his fingers by the deaf-and-dumb alphabet. "The Emperor does not want to know about the Turks. He wants to know why a soldier is on guard in the old archery-ground precisely thirty-seven paces south-west-by-south from the spot where the southern-most target used to stand", for these were the bearings shown on the Colonel of the Guard's sentry-plan.

"Oh!" said the Senior Field Marshal, not concealing his disappointment. "Well my memory is not what it used to be; but I dare say he was put there, to start with as a punishment."

"But he has been there for years and years," gesticulated the Minister.

"I can quite believe it," said the Senior Field Marshal. "Discipline was discipline in my days."

"And moreover, it is not the same soldier! The guard is relieved every four hours."

"To be sure," said the Senior Field Marshal.

"That introduces a new factor into our calculations. Fours into twenty-four goes eight-no six. six times three hundred and sixty-five, not counting leap years—"

The Minister left him to reckon it out and drove back to the war office in dejection of spirits. Towards the close of the day he was obliged to present himself at the palace and admit, with tears in his eyes, that all his investigations had been in vain. No one in the Army could tell, nor was there any record to show, why the soldier stood on the grass plot.

Meanwhile, and all through the afternoon, a whole corps of engineers had been examining the turf inch by inch, and they could report no clue.

On the third day the Czar sent round the heralds with a proclamation. He offered the sum of one thousand roubles and a free pardon to anyone who would come forward with the true solution.

In a top attic of the palace an old woman sat spinning linen for the imperial table-cloths. She was forgotten by everybody save by the little maidservant whose duty it was to bring



her meals and she had bent over the spinning-wheel so long that her body was almost two-double. But in her time she had been nurse to a former Czarina—to the present Czar's grandmother in fact.

"Dear me!" said the old Nurse: "There go the heralds' trumpets, or down in the city. His Imperial Majesty must be sending out some proclamation or other. I do hope he is not declaring war against anybody?"

"Why, haven't you heard?" said the little maid servant; "It's about the soldier."

"What soldier?"

"The soldier in the grass plot."

"What grass plot?"

"Why the one where they used to shoot with bows and arrows. There's a soldier almost in the middle of it, standing guard, and everyone is wild to know what he is guarding."

"But everyone *ought* to know that," said the old nurse. "Mercy on us, what forgetful heads we do wear in these days!"

"But *nobody* knows," cried the little maid-servant, staring at her, "and the Czar is offering a thousand roubles to anyone who can tell him!"

"My child" said the Nurse, smiling on her; "that—or a part of it—would make you a very pretty marriage-portion, would it not? Well you are a good child. Take my arm and lead me downstairs to his Imperial Majesty."

So the little maidservant led her downstairs and when they came into Czar's presence the old Nurse dropped a curtsy and said :

"May it please your Imperial Majesty I can tell you all about the soldier on the grass plot. Years and years ago when the Czarina, your Majesty's grandmother, was a bride, she held a great contest of archery, for the court ladies were famous archers in those days—she being one of the skilfulest—such a beautiful arm and wrist as she had, too! There is nothing like archery to show off a pretty arm and wrist.

"Well, there the ladies were assembled, one fine spring afternoon, and when they had shot their first flight of arrows at the butts, they were all hurrying forward to count their hits and change ends. But the Czarina stopped suddenly and called on them all to stop. Then she dropped on her knees and they all gathered about her: for there, almost in the



middle of the turf, she had happened on the first violet of the year.

"The Czar, your Imperial Majesty's grandfather, came on the ground as they were all kneeling about her in a ring admiring it. Many declared it to be an omen of luck, for the Czarina was beginning to hope for a baby—who in time arrived indeed, and in time became your Imperial Majesty's father. The Czar, who adored his young wife, at once sent for a Guard and stationed him beside the violet to warn the ladies not to trample upon it as they passed to and from the butts. It was not a very comfortable position for the poor man there, almost in the line of fire, and the Czarina, seeing him wince once or twice as an arrow passed him by rather too closely, called the contest at an end; she had ever a soft heart, even for the humblest. But the Guard remained to warn off the common folks, and there, no doubt, he has remained ever since."

"But what about the violet?" asked the Czar.

They went and searched. There was not a trace of it. The flower had long since disappeared.

Yet not for ever. The Guard was withdrawn ; and in time he in his turn was almost forgotten, and the spot where he had stood. But one day the twenty-second gardener's five years old daughter (he had been but the forty-sixth gardener when he married the little maid servant—so, you see, they were rising rapidly in the world) came running to her mother with a flower she had discovered while playing on the old archery-ground.

“See mother ! The first violet of the year !”

So the violet had come to life again when the heavy boots of the sentries were no longer there to trample it. But this part of the tale never reached the Palace, where, however, when they have occasion to talk of red tape, they still use a phrase of which few remember the origin : “ *But how shall we get the Soldier off the grass plot ?*”

#### Notes

1. **Czar**—an Emperor, specially of Russia.
2. **St. Petersburg**—old capital of Russia.
3. **Bismark** (1815—1898)—one of the greatest statesmen of Germany. He was the maker of modern Germany.
4. **Lord Chamberlain**—the officer who manages the household of the ruler.



5. **Present**—the position in which a gun is placed before firing.
6. **Petunias**—ornamental flowers.
7. **Finn**—a resident of Finland.
8. **A pretty-to-do**—great excitement.
9. **Pigeon-holes**—small compartments where documents are kept.
10. **Dossier**—a bundle of documents.
11. **Rouble**—a Russian coin.
12. **Attic**—a room in the roof of a house.
13. **Marriage-portion**—dowry.
14. **In the line of fire**—within the range of the arrows that were shot.
15. **Red-tape**—excessive use of formalities in official work.

## COMPOSITION

1. **Frame sentences to distinguish between :—**  
Corps, corpse, carcass.

2. **Illustrate the use of the following in your sentences :—**  
<sup>सुनि</sup> go to bed ; <sup>पुनः</sup> put on ; <sup>आमंत्रि</sup> send for ; <sup>आह्वान</sup> call upon ; <sup>सम</sup> on the contrary ; in vain.

3. **Explain :—**(a) Their uniform clashes in colour with petunias.

(b) There is more wealth than taste in country.

4. **Explain the following :—**" May it please..... wrist."

- ✓ 5. Why has the lesson been given the heading 'The Czarina's Violet'?
- ✓ 6. Describe the red-tapism of old Russia.

## GRAMMAR

1. Parse the italicised :—He was *no other than* Prince Bismark.
2. Analyse: —“After breakfast.....first class.”
3. Change the narration of the conversation between the Czar and Bismark.

*the teacher ask*



## AT THE HIGH SCHOOL

M. K. Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) was a world figure. He is rightly called the Father of Nation. He was an apostle of truth and non-violence, which he preached in word and deed. By his untiring zeal and selfless efforts, he infused a fresh life in the people of India. He made history in winning freedom for his country without blood-shed. Martyrdom is the goal of such pioneers, who are far beyond their age. Unluckily he was shot dead by a youth who could not appreciate his message of love and peace. Physically he is dead, but he is immortal. His autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*, is an inspiring book which every young man ought to read. His style of simple prose should be copied.

I have already said that I was learning at the high school when I was married. We three brothers were learning at the same school. The eldest brother was in a much higher class, and the brother who was married at the same time as I was only one class ahead of me. Marriage resulted in both of us wasting a year. Indeed the result was even worse for my brother, for he gave up studies altogether. Heaven knows how many youths are in the same plight as he. Only in our present Hindu society do studies and marriage go thus hand in hand.

My studies were continued. I was not regarded as a dunce at the high school. I always enjoyed the affection of my teachers. Certificates of progress and character used to be sent to the parents every year. I never had a bad certificate. In fact I even won prizes after I passed out of the second standard. In the fifth and sixth I obtained scholarships of rupees four and ten respectively, an achievement for which I have to thank good luck more than my merit. For the scholarships were not open to all, but reserved for the best boys amongst those coming from the Sorath Division of Kathiawad. And in those days there could not have been many boys from Sorath in a class of forty to fifty.

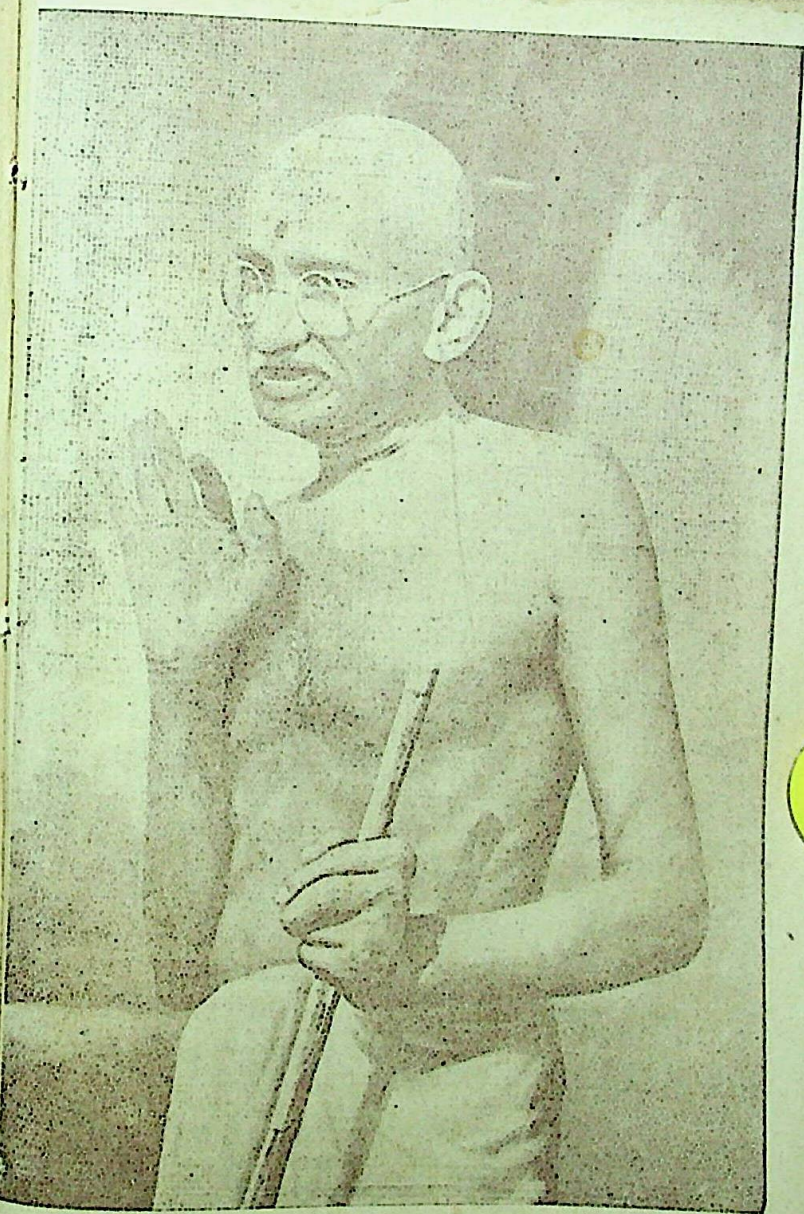
(My own recollection is that I had not any high regard for my ability.) I used to be astonished whenever I won prizes and scholarships. (But I very jealously guarded my character.) The least little blemish drew tears from my eyes: (When I merited, or seemed to the teacher to merit, a rebuke, it was unbearable for me; I remember having once received corporal punishment. I did not so much mind the punishment as the fact that it was considered my desert.) I wept piteously.



That was when I was in the first or second standard. There was another such incident during the time when I was in the seventh standard. Dorabji Edulji Gimi was the headmaster then. He was popular among boys, as he was a disciplinarian, a man of method and a good teacher. He had made gymnastics and cricket compulsory for boys of the upper standards. I disliked both. I never took part in any exercise, cricket or football, before they were made compulsory. My shyness was one of the reasons for this aloofness, which I now see was wrong. I then had the false notion that gymnastic had nothing to do with education. (To-day I know that physical training should have as much place in the curriculum as mental training.)

I may mention, however, that I was none the worse for abstaining from exercise. That was because I had read in books about the benefits of long walks in the open air, and having liked the advice, I had formed a habit of taking walks, which has still remained with me. These walks gave me a fairly hardy constitution.

The reason of my dislike for gymnastics was my keen desire to serve as nurse to my



**MAHATAMA GANDHI**



alternative  
रान्ता - मग्न

father. As soon as the school closed, I would hurry home and begin serving him. Compulsory exercise came directly in the way of this service. I requested Mr. Gimi to exempt me from gymnastics so that I might be free to serve my father. But he would not listen to me. Now it so happened that one Saturday, when we had school in the morning, I had to go from home to the school for gymnastics at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I had no watch, and the clouds deceived me. Before I reached the school the boys had all left. The next day Mr. Gimi, examining the roll, found me marked absent. Being asked the reason for absence, I told him what had happened. He refused to believe me and ordered me to pay a fine of one or two annas (I cannot now recall how much).

I was convicted of lying! That deeply pained me. How was I to prove my innocence? There was no way. I cried in deep anguish. I saw that a man of truth must also be a man of care. This was the first and last instance of my carelessness in school. I have a faint recollection that I finally succeeded in getting the fine remitted. The exemption from exercise was of course obtained, as my father



wrote himself to the headmaster saying that he wanted <sup>to</sup> ~~me~~ <sup>Barley</sup> at home after school.

But though I was none the worse for having neglected exercise, I am still paying the penalty of another neglect. I do not know whence I got the notion that good handwriting was not a necessary part of education, but I retained it until I went to England. When later, especially in South Africa, I saw the beautiful handwriting of lawyers and young men born and educated in South Africa, I was ashamed of myself and repented of my neglect. I saw that bad handwriting should be regarded as a sign of an imperfect education. I tried later to improve mine, but it was too late. I could never repair the neglect of my youth. Let every young man and woman be warned by my example, and understand that good handwriting is a necessary part of education. I am now of opinion that children should first be taught the art of drawing before learning how to write. Let the child learn his letters by observation as he does different objects, such as flowers, birds, etc., and let him learn handwriting only after he has learnt to draw objects. He will then write a beautifully formed hand.

Two more reminiscences of my school days are worth recording.

I had lost one year because of my marriage, and the teacher wanted me to make good the loss by skipping a class

Right a privilege usually allowed to industrious boys. I therefore had only six months in the third standard and was promoted to the fourth after the examinations which are followed by the summer vacation. English became the medium of instructions in most subjects from the fourth standard. I found myself completely at sea. Geometry was a new subject in which I was not particularly strong, and the English ~~that~~ medium made it still more difficult for me. The teacher taught the subject very well, but I could not follow him. Often I would lose heart and think of going back to the third standard ~~feeling~~ feeling that the packing of two years' studies in to single year was ambitious.



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But this would discredit not only me, But also Father; because Counting among industry, he had recommended my Promotion. so the fear of the double discredit kept me at my Post. When however, with much effort I reached the thirteenth Proposition of euclid, the utter simplicity of the subject was suddenly revealed to me. A subject which only required a Pure and Simple use of one's reasoning Powers could not be difficult. Ever since that time geometry has been both easy and interesting for me.

Sampson however Proved a harder task. in geometry there was nothing to memorize whereas in Sampson. I thought every thing had to be learnt by heart. The subject also was commenced from the fourth <sup>standard</sup> as soon as I entered the sixth I became disengaged.

The ~~teacher~~<sup>5-650</sup> was a hard task-  
master and ~~anxious~~<sup>5-650</sup>, as I thought to  
force the boys. There was a sort  
of rivalry going on between the  
Sanskrit and the Persian tea-  
chers. The Persian ~~teacher~~<sup>अध्यापक</sup> was  
lenient the boys used to talk  
among themselves that Persian  
was very easy and the Persian  
teacher very good and considera-  
ble in the students. The easiness  
tempted me and one day I sat  
in the Persian class. The Sans-  
krit teacher was grived.

He called me to his side and  
said - how can you forget  
that you are the son of a Kshatri-  
ya father? if you have  
any difficulty, why <sup>I</sup> not come  
to me? I want to teach you stu-  
dents Sanskrit to best of my  
ability. as you proceed  
further, you will find it

things of absorbing interest.



you should never <sup>कभी</sup> hear  
come and sit again in the same  
class. This kindness put  
me to shame & could not  
disregard my teacher's affec-  
tion. to day can not but thin  
k with <sup>कृतज्ञता</sup> gratitude of Kri-  
shnasankara Pandya. for  
if I had not <sup>गुप्त</sup> acquired the  
little Sanskrit that I learn-  
then I should have found it  
difficult to take any inter-  
est in our sacred books. in  
fact I <sup>विशेष</sup> <sup>गहन</sup> <sup>मनन</sup> deeply regret that I  
was not able to acquire a  
more thorough knowledge  
of the language, because  
I have since <sup>कभी</sup> realized that  
every Hindu boy and girl shou-  
ld <sup>गुप्त</sup> possess <sup>गहन</sup> sound Sanskrit  
learning.

It is now my opinion that in an  
indian <sup>पाठ्य</sup> Curricula of higher educa-  
tion there should be a place for  
hindi, Sanskrit Persian, Arabic,  
and english besides of course the  
<sup>उपभाषा</sup> vernacular. This big list need not  
<sup>उत्प्रेक्षा</sup> frighten anyone of our education  
were more systematic, and the  
boys free from the burden  
of having to learn their  
subjects through a foreign  
medium, I am sure, learning  
all these languages would not  
be an irksome <sup>तृष्णा</sup> task, but a  
perfect <sup>आनन्द</sup> pleasure. Scientific  
knowledge of one language  
makes knowledge of other lan-  
guages comparatively easy.  
in reality, hindi Gujarati and  
Sanskrit may be regarded as  
one language and Persian and  
Arabic also as one. Though  
Persian belongs to the aryan,  
and Arabic to semitic, family of  
languages, there is a close



Relationship between Persian  
and Arabic because both claim  
in their full growth through  
the rise of Islam. Urdu has  
not regarded as a distinct lan-  
guage, because it has adopted  
the Hindi grammar and its vo-  
cabulary is mainly Persian  
and Arabic. and the who would  
learn good Urdu must  
learn Persian and Arabic as  
one who would learn  
good Gujarati, Hindi, or Ma-  
rathi must learn Sans-  
krit.